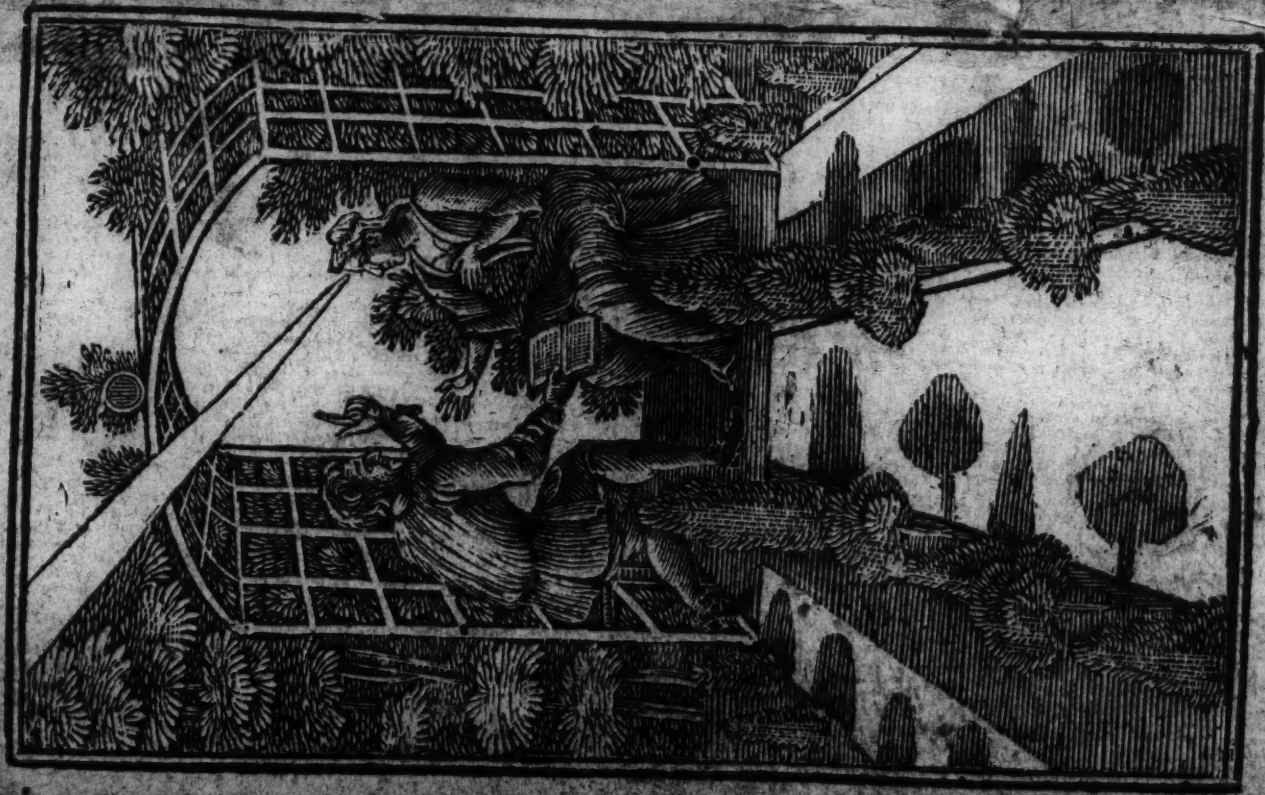




THE 1494. d. 37.

French Convert :

Being a True Relation of the

Happy Conversion

O F A

Noble French LADY,

F R O M

The Errors and Superstitions of *Papery*,
to the *Reformed Religion*, by Means of a *Pro-*
testant Gardener her Servant.

Wherein is shewed,

Her Great and Unparallell'd Sufferings
on the Account of her said Conversion ; as also,
Her wonderful Deliverance from two Assassines
hired by a *Popish* Priest to murder her ; And of
her miraculous Preservation in a Wood for two
Years ; and how she was at last providentially
found by her Husband, who, (together with
her Parents) was brought over by her Means
to the Embracing of the True Religion, as were
divers others also.

To which is added,

A brief Account of the present Severe
Persecutions of the *French Protestants.*

The Eighth Edition.

L O N D O N : Printed for Edw. Midthwinter, at
the Three Crowns and Looking-Glass in St. Paul's
Church-Yard. 1695.







The COPY of a LETTER
sent from a *French* Protestant Mi-
nister in *France*, to his Friend in
London, with the following Re-
lation.

My very good Friend,



Having received yours the 13th
of April, N. S. I was not a
little over-joy'd, even in my
Sufferings, to hear you are well
settled in a Country, where you
have the Freedom of enjoying the Exercise
of the True Religion, is a Thing to be va-
lued above all other earthly Blessings; and
not to that, I am much more gladdened to find
you inform me that the Climate so well agrees
with

The Copy of a Letter, &c.

with you and your Family, that you have been healthful ever since you departed from me; and the rest of your dear Friends here, though many of us, and particularly myself, labour under many Sufferings and Afflictions; I having (with many others) languish'd a long Time in Prison for the Sake of a good Conscience, afflicted with much Sickneſs, by reason of my cloſe Confinement, which (Bleſſed be the Name of God enabling me) I have born with Patience; though many have died unpitied of their cruel Perſecutors, yet the Cry of innocent Blood may in Time make them, How hard it is to kick againſt the Pricks; yet my Prayers are, That inſtead of ſending any fearful Judgment on theſe Popiſh Adverſaries, God would turn their Hearts, enlighten their Underſtandings, make them ſee the Error of their Ways, and repent of the many Evils they have done to the Poor Proteſtants, without any manner of Cauſe or Provocation; to whom their Rage and Malice extend even beyond Death, for they ſtill continue their old Way of denying them Chriſtian Burial. But this is all our Comfort, It matters not where our Bodies lie, ſo be it our Souls are infolded in Chriſt's Arms. Yet among the Miſeries and Threats of Death, which I have undergone in taking Care of the ſpiritual Welfare of thoſe

The Copy of a Letter, &c.

those that God has committed to my Charge, I cannot but be greatly comforted when you tell me, the French Protestant Church in England flourishes: and that the Members of it, Walk worthy of ther Calling, gaining, by their inoffensive Way of Living, a good Repute among Strangers; when in their native Country so much Inhumanity appears towards those of the Reformed Profession; for the Persecution in many Places rages still by their impoverishing of Thousands of Families. But not to be tedious to you, having nothing left to send you but my good Wishes and Prayers, except the inclosed Account of a very strange but blessed Alteration in the Family of the Count Alanson, a worthy Nobleman, well known to you; I have drawn it up upon the strictest Enquiry into the Truth of all the material Circumstances, as well as my Sufferings, and spare no Time for the Care of those under my Charge would permit; and send it to you as a Token of my Love, for the many Kindnesses I have received at your Hands; that so you might communicate it to others, and make it publick if you see Occasion; that all may be made sensible of the wonderful Goodness of Almighty God, and praise him for the Works he doth unto the Children of Men. For the Cer-

The Copy of a Letter, &c.

*tainty of what I have written, though I have
obliged for Methods-sake to use a few Ex-
pressions of my own, you may firmly rely on
my Integrity, who am always a Well-wisher
to the Health of your Soul and Body.*



A D'Auborn.

THE

T H E

French Convert, &c.

I N Writing of the following Relation, wherein injured Innocence and oppressed Virtue does so eminently triumph over all the Rage and Malice both of Men and Devils. I shall not study to adorn my Stile with Flowers of Rhetorick, but lead the Reader by the Clue of Truth into the adorable Mysteries of Divine Providence, which are here displayed in such a Series of Wonders, as can scarce be paralleled. As an Introduction to which, I will a little consider how the Divine Goodness delights to bring Light out of Darkness, and makes even the Wicked confound themselves in their own Devices, that out of their Evil Designs he may bring Good to pass. For as *Joseph's* being sold into *Egypt*; and there falsely accused of Adultery, advanced him next to a Throne, and turned to the Shame of his accusing Mistress and treacherous Brethren; tho' at the Beginning God meant it for Good, that he

A S might

might be instrumental to preserve his Father and his Household alive, and turned the Malice of the *Patriarchs* into a Blessing: So the Miseries and extraordinary Sufferings of the noble Lady, whose Story I am going to recite, was made use of by Divine Providence, as a Means of the Conversion of her Husband, Parents, and many others, to the *True Religion*; which, as she had often said since, has been a very ample and glorious Recompence. But I shall not anticipate what with more Satisfaction you will find in the Relation it self; which take as follows.

In *Britany*, one of the fairest Provinces of *France*, there lately lived *Alanfon*, a Person of noble Extraction, and of an Estate suitable to the Greatness of his Birth, and those noble Qualities that enriched his Mind. Who being a Lover of Military Actions, was easily persuaded to serve the King in the Wars, where having an eminent Command given him, he behav'd himself with that Bravery as gained him the Admiration of his Enemies, the Love of his Friends, and fresh Honours from his King, who took particular Notice of his great Performances.

But

But in the Intervals of two or three Campaigns, he cast his Eyes upon one *Deidamia*, a young Lady of Quality, not inferior to himself for Birth, whose Beauty and Virtue were equally attractive. To her he made his Addresses, and the Equality of their Birth, and the Suitableness of their Dispositions, made his Conquest the more easy ; so that in a little Time they were Contracted and Married, to their mutual Joy and Satisfaction.

This happy Couple having for a whole Winter enjoy'd the Blessing of each others mutual Love and endeared Affections, without the least Umbrage of any interposing Cloud that might give an Alloy to their Happiness ; at length the Spring came on, and the Armies gathering together, summoned *Atanson* from the Repose he took in the soft Embraces of his chaste and loving Wife, to the Field of War, to act his Part again upon that Stage of Honour, where he had already acquired so much Reputation. But he never seemed so unwilling to court Fame Abroad as now, since he must of necessity leave behind him the dearest Part of himself ; he had many Strugglings and Combats in his Mind, which seemed to be divided between Love and Honour ;
he

he was loath to leave his Lady, and yet unwilling to have his Reputation sullied : And these different Passions in the Mind, caused such an Alteration in his Countenance, that it was taken Notice of by his Lady, who not knowing the Cause, was the more troubled at it. And therefore following him one Day into the Garden, (whither he had retir'd to consider with himself what he had best to do) she earnestly pressed him to let her know what it was that troubled him ; for she had for some Time, she said, observed he was disquieted, but could not tell at what ; and she was fearful she might some Way, (tho' she knew it not,) be the Occasion of it ; adding, *Command me in any Thing a Wife can justly do, and I am all Obedience.* This tender Carriage of his Lady, added fresh Fuel to the Fire of his Affliction, and made him still far more unwilling to leave her. Wherefore causing her to sit down by him, he told her, She was indeed the innocent Occasion of his Trouble, for her great Love and Tenderness to him, had so engaged his Heart to her in a reciprocal Affection, that he knew not how to think of leaving her, though Honour loudly called him to the Field. His Lady, when he talked of
leaving

leaving her, was hardly kept from swooning in his Arms, and could not forbear saying, *What ! must we part then ? ah ! wretched Deidamia !* and straightways fell a Weeping : Her Tears did so prevail upon the Count, that Love had now obtained an entire Victory ; and he resolved to stay at Home with *Deidamia* ; and therefore intreated her to dry up her Tears, and be comforted ; for he had now come to a Resolution, rather to undergo some hard Censures for staying at Home, than by his going to the Camp leave his dear *Deidamia* disconsolate — These kind Assurances of her Husband, gave her that Satisfaction which soon shewed it self in a chearful Countenance. And the endearing Expressions she gave the Count on that Occasion, made him conclude they were both happy in each others Love —

But behold the Inconstancy of Worldly Happiness, and how little we can promise ourselves of it here ! We may indeed both Purpose and Resolve ; but we can't secure our selves from Disappointments : The Footsteps of Divine Providence are often hard to trace. Hence it is that we are told by the inspired Penman, *That the Ways of God are in the Deep,*

Deep, and his Paths in the great Waters, and his Footsteps are not known. And we see often, whatever pleasing Prospect of Felicity we have in View, one unforeseen Occasion, or sudden Turn of Providence, destroys it, and in a Moment deprives us of that Happiness which we had promised to ourselves for many Years : And yet these Changes, to those that fear the Lord, are so disposed and ordered by God's Providence, that in the End they evidently work together for their Good.

— And thus it fell out in the Instance before us : For whilst *Alanfon* and his *Deidamia* delighted in each other, and were both happy in their Conjugal Affection, an Accident fell out, that put him under a Necessity of going to the Camp, which was, That a Colonel's Place in the Regiment of *Picardy* being vacant, a Relation of *Alanfon's* at Court, out of a too officious Kindness, put the King in Mind of the good Services of *Alanfon*, and desired his Majesty to bestow that Vacancy upon him : To which his Majesty (being sensible of his former Bravery and good Service) readily consented, and ordered his Commission to be sent to him, which was done accordingly. When *Alanfon* received this Com-
mission

mission from the Pursevant who brought it, he gave him a generous Reward for his Pains ; but was not very well pleased, neither with the new Honour his Majesty had given him, nor with his Kinsman's too Officious Kindness in procuring it ; because it put him under a Necessity of parting from his Lady, which gave him a very sensible Displeasure : But knowing that by his Commission he was engaged too far for a Retreat, his Care was how to make his *Deidamia* as easie as he could ; and therefore calling her to take a Turn with him in the Garden, and leading her into an Arbour covered with *Jessamine*, he thus began to tell her the unwelcome News that had been brought him. *My dearest Deidamia, let me conjure you not to be troubled at what I am going now to tell you, but if you will oblige me, do it by shewing your Resolution and Fortitude of Mind ; and yet I cannot but own, That our Resolves like little Heaps of Sand, are quickly brought to nothing ; but the Decrees of Heaven, like the Foundations of the Earth, are fix'd forever. 'Twas in this very Arbour, my dearest Deidamia, that I resolved to stay at Home with thee, and not return to the Campaign in Flanders ; and I appeal to him who knows my Heart, how*
firmly.

firmly I intended ; but see here, how I am forced against my Will to break my Resolutions ; (and with that he shewed her the Commission the King had sent him to be Colonel of the Regiment of Picardy) and now you see, my Deidamia, the Necessity that lies upon me to leave you for a Time ; but though our Bodies be divided, we will have yet one Soul, and Love, whilst Providence denies us to live together. And whilst I in the Field am fighting for my Country, you shall stay here, and pray for my Success : And if it pleases God that I return, (which I do not doubt at all, for Heaven I am sure will hear your fervent Prayers) it will be a new Addition to my Joy, to lay those Laurels I shall win in Battle at Deidamia's Feet. Poor Deidamia heard this heavy News with a sad Heart, but answered with Piety and Prudence worthy of her self, That since what happened was not of his seeking, but what the Providence of God had called him to, she thought it was her Duty, tho' she could hardly do it without Reluctancy, to acquiesce in the Divine Disposal of all human Actions, and would endeavour to stifle her Resentments, rather than give him any farther Trouble. *Alanson* being no less pleased with *Deidamia's* Prudence than her kind

kind Affection, which he expressed by several tender Things he told her, applied himself to the getting ready of his Equipage, in order to his Departure ; and the settling the Affairs of his Family ; ordering *Antonio* his Chaplain, who was a Fryar of the Order of *St. Francis*, to say a solemn Mass for his Success in the Field, and the Protection of his Lady and Family in his Absence ; Recommending his dearest *Deidamia* to the Care of *Antonio* his Chaplain, and *Fronovius* his Steward of his Household, in these Words, *To your Care in my Absence, I recommend the Safety and Welfare of my beloved Lady, the most virtuous and loving of Wives ; and Charge you, as you expect to Answer it to God and me, be obedient to all her Commands ; comfort and cherish her in her Solitude, and see that all my Domesticks pay the like exact Respects ; This and much more they faithfully promised to observe. Then giving liberally to each Servant, and having Notice that his Equipage was ready, and divers Gentlemen on Horse-back waited to accompany him, he took his solemn Leave of his dear *Deidamia*, whose sad presaging Heart was overcome with Grief to that Degree, that she could only speak these few*

few prophetick Words, *Ah! my dear Lord! may Heaven prevent my Fears! But my poor Heart fore-bodes that this will be a long and fatal Parting.* To which the Count replied, Do not cast down thy self, dear *Deidamia*, by the indulging of such melancholy Fancies; but assure your self, I'll hasten my Return as much as possible, and I will send to you as often as I can. And in the mean Time shall commit you to the Protection of the Almighty, the blessed Virgin Mother, and all the holy Saints and Angels; and so embracing of her in his Arms, and sealing his Affections on her Lips with gentle Kisses, he took his Leave of her, and rid away; not thinking he had left an innocent Dove to the Protection of two ravenous Vultures.

It is not much to my Purpose to tell you, how well he was received at the Head of his Command by the Duke of *Luxemburg*, or what brave Exploits his Courage carried him through, since neither Fame, nor the publick News from *Paris* have been wanting to speak his Commendation: I therefore omit it, (unless in some Passages, where it will, in the Thread of this amazing Relation, be necessary to mention some Particulars)

lars) and shall continue with the sorrowful *Deidamia*, who after his Departure, seemed to have banished all Comfort from her Breast ; all that she found was in her Devotions and Prayers to Almighty God, for his Protection and safe Return, greatly affecting Solitude ; and as much as she could, avoided the Visits of divers Ladies, who (as they say) came to make her merry, and divert her Melancholy, she being very well Beloved, both by the Nobility and Gentry for her comely Carriage, modest Behaviour, sweetness of Temper, and Affability.

In the Cool of the Day she usually made it her Business to retire into her Garden, pensive and alone ; it being by the Care and Diligence of the Gardener, kept and ordered like another *Paradise*, stored with great Variety of choice Plants and Flowers, adorned with pleasant Fountains, and several delightful Arbours, shaded over with intertwining *Jessamine*, in one of which she and her absent Lord had passed some joyful as well as sad Hours, and at the Remembrance of them would sadly Weep, then Pray (according to the Custom of the *Papists*, who allow praying to Saints) to the Tutelary Saints for his Protection :

Protection : And so drying up her Tears, would walk thence again, taking but little Rest in any Place : But one Time passing by a Bed of Tulips, she espied *Bernard* her Gardiner (for so was he called) busy in Watering them, and erecting, such as declined their druping Heads, occasioned by the Heat of the Sun's too scorching Beams ; she had often in this Man observed a harmless native Innocence, accompanied with acute Ingenuity, (and indeed a Gardiner, who understands his Business as he ought to do, must be an ingenious Man) and therefore imagined it might administer to her some Advantage to hold Discourse with him, in what related to the Mystery of Gardening, thinking it no undervaluing, tho' he was her menial Servant, since she had often read, That *Kings, Princes, and other great and wise Men, had voluntarily become of this Occupation : That Adam, when Governor of all the World, was employed in it by God himself ;* so that coming close to him, whilst his Hands were busied at his Work ; the Man by his Ear, (his back being towards her) being informed of some Body's approach, suddenly started up, and seeing his beautiful Lady near him, was a little surpriz'd,

priz'd, and would have retir'd to give her the more Freedom in her Walks; but she prevented him, by saying, *Bernard, Pray don't let me hinder you in your Business; I came on purpose to observe your Dexterity in Gardening: I see you mind it with a just Diligence, though your Lord is absent.* Madam (replied he) *I beg your Ladyship's Pardon, in that I tell you, I am no Eye-servant, as well knowing I must give an Account to God, as well as to Man, if I am negligent in what I promise to perform, and am intrusted with.* Deidamia stood surpris'd at the Man's plain, but ingenious Reply; and changing somewhat the Manner of her Discourse, asked him divers Questions about the *Virtues, Natures, Quality, and Production of Flowers and Plants, &c.* in all which he satisfied her to her Admiration; by which she perceived him better learned in the *Mysteries of Nature, than she expected from one of his Profession.* And to be brief, she often held such innocent Conversation with him, when at any Time she found him busie in the Garden, being much delighted to hear him Discourse, how much of the Wisdom and Goodness of God might be learned from the Works of Creation; for he had a peculiar Faculty

culty of Spiritualizing his Employment ; and making his Business serve, like *Jacob's* Ladder, to carry him from Earth to Heaven. Which sometimes caused her to reflect, that this Man was something more than he appeared to be, (in which indeed she was not much mistaken) so that entertaining a good Opinion of him, she ordered his Lodging to be changed for a better ; and his course and homely Commons to be enlarged, above what was usual to those of his Profession and Degree.

But now *Antonio* the Chaplain, however he had appeared like a Saint to his Master, began to shew himself a Devil to his Mistress, and too plainly shewed his Cloven Foot ; for tho' above Fifty Years of Age, he had for some Time harboured lustful Desires towards the fair and beautiful *Deidamia*, that he was now resolved to attempt her Chastity. And tho' her Virtue and her spotless Chastity might very well have kept him from pursuing his unclean Desires, yet he flattered himself with Hopes of obtaining his End by corrupting her Judgment : In which he found himself very much mistaken, the Sequel will declare. For the Divine Goodness had a farther Work to do

Deidamia

Deidamia; who being altogether ignorant of what this Wretch designed against her Honour, frequented her beloved Garden as she used to do; and one Evening hearing the Gardener reading in a lonely Arbour, where he thought himself secure (for he had industriously concealed his being a *Protestant* from any of the Family) her Curiosity to hear him, made her draw nigh so softly that he could not hear her: He was then reading the first Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, from the 20th to the End of the 23d Verse, viz. *For the invisible Things of him from the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the Things that are made, even his eternal Power and God-head; so that they are without Excuse: because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish Hearts were darkned: Professing themselves to be wise they became Fools, and changed the Glory of the uncorruptible God, into an Image made like to corruptible Man, and to Birds, and four footed Beasts, and creeping Things.*

Having thus far proceeded, he paused, and with Eyes lifted up to Heaven, gave Glory unto God, that he had preserved him

him Blameless from these Offences against his Divine Majesty, which through Ignorance and Superstition had over-spread the greatest Part of *Europe*: O Lord, continued he, *I humbly beseech thee, as I have already suffered Persecution for thy Name's Sake, and for the Sake of a good Conscience, so never let me depart from the Ways of thy Truth, to change thy incorruptible Glory into an Image made like corruptible Man*: And when he had said this, Tears stood in his Eyes, and his Words were succeeded by Sighs, and then by Silence.

Deidamia, who had all this while attentively listened, found something in her Mind, that made a sudden uneasy Alteration, and thought to have gone away undiscover'd; but then again, her Zeal for the *Romish* Religion, which she thought he had reproached, by detesting Image-worship, carried her so far, as she resolved to give him a sharp Reprimand, lest he persisting farther, until discovered by others, might ruin himself, tho' her Goodness and gentle Nature was not for working him any Injury by revealing it. But never was Man more surprized than *Bernard* when he saw her whom at that Time of Day he little suspected, as not being usual! yet collected

ing his scattered Senses, he arose from his Seat, and withal endeavoured to hide his Bible under his Coat, thinking she had been newly come, and might neither have heard him Read, nor seen his Bible, but she in a frowning Manner, contrary to the wonted Sweetness of her Temper, commanded him to deliver it to her, that the Flames might conceal his Fault; and told him, she would not for that Time, discover his being conversant with a Book so strictly by the Church prohibited to the Laity; for, continued she, it is enough that we believe as the Church believes without farther Dispute, of puzzling our selves with those Scruples and Niceties, which in all Probability we may make a false Construction of, and wrest even those Scriptures that are the Rule of our Faith, to our own Damnation.

This smart Discourse, and the Frowns in the Fair *Deidamia's* Countenance, did not in this Case so much daunt *Bernard*, as in another of less Concern it might have done; but with some Assurance, he replied, Ah, Madam! I little thought of being surpriz'd by you at my Devotions; but since I am, I cannot grant what you demand; rather you may Command my

B

Body

Body to the Flames, and as a willing Martyr I will sooner go, than betray the Cause of God, in delivering up his holy Word to be consumed, in which is contained all Things necessary to Salvation ; and it should be in me an apparent Contempt of that Salvation, should I voluntarily, or through Fear, cast it from me. As to your saying, *Madam*, That the Church has prohibited the *Laity* the use of this sacred *Book*, especially in a *Public* Tongue, I readily grant it ; but, O most virtuous Lady, you little know their Policy in that, it is not that they fear or are what Misconstructions Men make of it ; because it is like Arrows in the Hand of a Giant, strong against their Worldly Interest, plainly discovering their Errors, gross Idolatries. — He would have proceeded, but Heat of Zeal prompted her hastily to interrupt him, saying, Surely *Bernard*, you are distracted, or else, what's worse, a *Heretick* : I took you to be Wiser and more Reasonable, when I discoursed you the other Day. Truly, *Madam*, replied he, as for my being in my right Senses, I bless Almighty God, he has in his Mercy hitherto continued them to me ; and for my being a *Heretick*, pardon me, if *St. Paul* an-

swer

swers for me, when he was accused before Felix, saying, *But this I confess unto thee, after the Way which they call Heresie, so Worship I the God of my Fathers ; believing all Things that are Written in the Law and the Prophets.* Upon this, *Deidamia*, who by Nature was all Goodness, Gentleness, and Affableness, began to moderate her Anger, and to consider a little what he had said, yet her Zeal for the Religion she loved, made her mildly Rebuke him, and lay before him the Danger he was in, if his Opinion was discovered ; bidding him be Cautious and Wise in what he did ; though for her Part he need not fear but she would lock up what she had discovered, in her Breast, and it should pass no farther ; and so deparing, left him in some Confusion.

Deidamia retiring to her Chamber, began to consider what had passed, and remembered she had often wept in her tender Years, when she heard the Cruelties the *Roman Catholicks* used towards the *Hugenots* or *Protestants* in *France* ; and disapproving of their persecuting Spirit, as not of God ; whose chiefest Attribute is *Mercy*, tender *Compassion*, and *Forgiveness* ; who, on the contrary, she found those who made Religion so much their Boast,

so very Cruel, that far from the Instance of our Saviour's refusing to call for Fire from Heaven to consume those that had injuriously and despightfully used him, they made their very Worship and Devotions a Snare, to bring those under their cruel Handlings, who had no wise offended them, but in being seperated from them, and moving according to the Dictates of their Conscience. She had likewise observed the Harmlessness and Inoffensive Manner of Living in the Persecuted, and often shewed some Dislike of the Loosness and Unchristian Practices of the Persecutors ; so that altho' she had a good Opinion of the *Romish* Religion, as having been brought up in it from her Infancy, yet had she not so of many of the Professors of it, who apparently derogated from the Ways of Virtue, and seemed to encourage Vice.

This wrought some Labourings in her Mind, through the gracious Operation of the Holy Spirit ; and in her Night-Thoughts more seriously reflecting on many Things, and particularly on the Gardener's Expression out of *St. Paul's* Words to *Felix* the Governor, inferring from thence, That it must be the Sincerity of the Heart towards God, more
than

than the Shew or outward Name, or Profession of any Religion. that renders the Person acceptable in his Sight. In the midst of these Cogitations and Debates within her self, she found something (as 'twere by an over-ruling Power) strongly move her to a Desire of farther Con- versing with *Bernard*, about the *Fundamentals* of his *Religion*; which by the *Popish Priests*, as well in their *Pulpits*, as private Conversation, had been represented so Odious, Damnable, and to be Detested.

The Morning no sooner summon'd the Gardener to visit his *Flowers* and *Plants*, and perform his usual Task in Watering and Ordering 'em; but *Deidamia*, who had taken little Rest that Night, arose; and having performed her Orisons, and then refreshing her self with a moderate Re- fection, took an Opportunity between that and Dinner time to enter the Gar- den privately, at a Door that opened into it from her Apartment; and to Skreen the better what she intended, from prying Eyes, took divers Turns, and gathered *Posies* of *Flowers*, and then Fanning her self, as if the Heat offended her, passing many Winding Alleys, over- spread with pleasant Shades, she came

to the before-mention'd Arbour, and again surprized the Gardener in his Meditations: The Man was not under any Consternation at her coming, but rising and bowing low, would have departed out of good Manners, to give her the sole Freedom of that pleasant Bower; but she laid her Commands on him to stay, saying, She had considered of his former Discourse, and had made it her Business to find him out, that he might give her some better Reason for the Opinion he held, then yet he had done.

His Modesty, and his humble Thoughts he conceiv'd of himself, wou'd scarce give him Leave to sit down, though she often commanded him so to do; but at last he complied, and then she asked him, *Upon what Ground and Foundation the Basis of his Religion was fixed.*

Gardener. It is founded on the Scriptures of the *Old* and *New Testament*, which were written by Men inspired by the Holy Ghost, and given for our Instruction and Learning; it is only the Word of God that can warrant the Truth of any Possession in Religious Matters; and that we *Protestants* (through God's Assistance) labour to conform and live up to.

Deidamia.

Deidamia. *Ay, but you may be mistaken in the misinterpreting the Scriptures, and fall into gross Heresies, as our Church charges you; and therefore has strictly forbid the Laity of our Communion to meddle with them, lest, like Weapons put into the Hands of Idots, or Madmen, they injure themselves and others thereby.*

Gard. *Ah! Lady, shall I be free, and deal plainly with you in this Point?*

Dead. *With all my Heart, let me hear what you can say in Answer to it?*

Gard. *All Scriptures are given for our Learning, God is willing we should know his revealed Will, that we may be the better enabled to perform it. St. Paul commends the Bereans, and calls them Noble, because they searched the Scriptures, to see whether the Things they heard were so or no; and we have many Commands for this; as, Seek ye the Book of the Lord and Read, Isa. 34. 16. They were more Noble, in that they searched the Scriptures daily, Acts 17. 11. Let the Word of God dwell richly in you, Coli 3. 16. From a Child thou hast known the Scriptures, 2 Tim. iii. 15. Take the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, Eph. 6. 17. And many others that I might mention, which are to be found in the Scriptures; and*

this not commanded to *Some*, but to *All* that seek Salvation.

Died. *Certainly if our Church have seen this fit, they would not have denied it ; but being dangerous to Souls, it ought to be restrained.*

Gard. It is indeed dangerous to break God's Commandments, and to teach Men so to do, and to make the Word of God of none effect by Human Tradition. We know the *Woes* Christ pronounced against the *Pharisees* for these Things.

Deid. *Why, who are guilty of this ? The Church of Rome, the Holy Catholick Church, as it has many Ages been stiled, is surely unspotted of such Crimes,*

Gard. I wish I could say it was not, but it deeply is guilty, as in many other Particulars, so most eminently in this, That it professes no Man is obliged to receive the Scriptures as the Word of God, or to believe any of it, but for the Testimony of your Church ; and to awe Men to such a Belief, Threats of Damnation are used, as well as the Magistrates Swords, and cruel Torments by *Inquisitions* ; and indeed it is not done without Ground : This is done to hinder prying into their gross Idolatries, Errors, and Super-

Superstitions, derogatory to the Scriptures, and exprefs Command of God.

Deid. *Sure you are besides your self: Nor can you prove this; but being fallen from the Church, do this only in Prejudice and Spight, to lay a Stain upon its Virgin Innocence.*

Gard. No; it is apparent from the Word of God, and even from Reason it self, in those that will consider, and are not blinded with Ignorance, which your Church in her Sense truly stiles the Mother of Devotion.

Deid. *Can any such Thing be in a Church that is Infallible? And to prove that it is so, it is said to be built upon St. Peter; he is the Rock spoken of; and this Rock doth, together with St. Peter, include his Successors, and the Church built on this Rock (that is united to, and built upon the Pope) is Infallible; for it is said, The Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.*

Gard. Pardon me, Lady, if I say, There is no Agreement among the Church-men about this infallible Judge; some will have it the Pope, some a General Council, and others both; none of your Writers have yet concluded on it. However, these Words are perverted; for it is more probable, that not Peter's Person, but his

Doctrine or Confession concerning Christ, is the *Rock* upon which the Church is built. Scripture is its best Interpreter : It is not *Peter*, but *Christ*, is the Foundation of the Church, as here in my *Bible* you may see, by the 28th Chapter and 16th Verse of *Isaiah*, compared with 1 *Pet.* 2, 6, 7, 8. which you may please to read, [*which she did*]. It is moreover expressly said, 1 *Cor.* 3. 11. *Other Foundation can no Man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* And this is the more considerable, because he speaks against those that made the *Apostles* to be Foundations, saying, *I am of Paul, another of Apollos, or Cephas;* and if this is spoke of *Peter*, no more is said of him here, than is spoke of all the Prophets and Apostles, *Ephes.* 2. 20. *Ye are built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets.*

Deid. Well, I am not much learned in this *Mystery*; but, pray, what as *Erroneous* can you assign in our *Worship*, or any other Thing the Church holds, as absolutely necessary?

Gard. The paying Divine Adoration to *Angels* and *Saints*, expressly contrary to God's Commands, and derogatory to his Honour, who alone ought to be worshipped in Heaven and Earth; and to
worship

worship any other, either Saint or Angel, or any Creature, is Idolatry, and a Breach of the Second Commandment.

Deid. *Nay, not too hasty; we do not worship the Angels and Saints as God, with the highest Worship, which is only proper to God; but with an inferiour Kind of Religious Worship, that they may present our Supplications to him.*

Gard. There is no Intercessor or Mediator but Christ Jesus, who is appointed to perform that Office; *If any Man want Wisdom, let him ask of God, James i. 5. Neither of Saints nor Angels. Come to me, saith our Saviour, and I will in no wise cast you out.* This free Invitation shews us, he alone is to receive our Petitions, and present them to his Father. There is also *Image-worship* brought cunningly by *Priests*, to gain Worldly Advantage; and pretended Miracles, to draw the Ignorant to pay their Devotion more at one Place than at another, imposing on the Ignorant for Lucre sake. I could say much more, but I fear to offend you.

Deid. No, you do not: But let us come nearer to the main Controversie. What think you of Transubstantiation? Is not Christ corporally present in the Sacrament?

Gard.

Gard. It is a Mis-representation of our Saviour's Words; for if he had so meant, as the Church of *Rome* hold it, when he break the Bread, he must have held himself in his own Hands, and eat himself yet still sit whole and entire at the Table; his whole Body must be in the Mouth of every Communicant at once, and that Body in Millions of Places at a Time, broken and unbroken, and be subject to Putrefaction; and therefore the Words, *This is my Body*, doth not intend, *This doth signify my Body*: And upon the same Account our Saviour is called a *Door*, a *Rock*, a *Vine*; yet none can be so void of Understanding, to believe he was turned into any of these. And therefore when he break the Bread, and gave the Cup, he did it only, that when Christian Congregations were met on solemn Occasions to celebrate his Worship, they should do it in Remembrance of him, till his coming in Glory at the last Day, as the immediate Words explain, and it is absurd to believe, that the Priest's uttering a few Words over a Wafer, can make it a God, or that Body offered on the Cross?

Deid. You amaze me: But pray what do you hold about Purgatory? Is there such a Place,

Place, where Souls are to endure their Purgations after Death, that go not immediately to Heaven, and by Masses and Prayer may be released sooner or later.

Gard. It is a Tradition lately brought in, and with it hath brought much increase of Wealth to the Church. The Word of God allows only Heaven for those who shall be made Vessels of Mercy; and Hell for those whose Sins have provoked him to cast them down to those dismal Regions of Sorrow, and eternal Woe: No Prayers after Death being available.

Deid. These Notions are as New as Strange to me, have you any Authentick Proof of this?

Gard. Yes; The revealed Word of God is a sacred Proof beyond all Denial: The Rich Man in Hell lifted up his Eyes being in Torment, Luke 16. 23. They shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of Heaven, but the other shall be cast into utter Darkness, where shall be Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth, Matth. 28. 12. He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned, Matth. 26. 16. Here is no such Thing as a Purgatory to be found; it is only the Blood of Christ that purgeth us from our Sins; and

and from all Uncleanness of Flesh and Spirit, to present our Souls Blameless and Unspotted to his Father : By this I understand those that die in the Lord, need not our Prayers, and those that die in their Sins no Prayers can avail them ; for in the Grave there is no Repentance ; *As the Tree falls, so it must lie, whether it falls towards the North, or towards the South, where it falls there it must lie.* There is only two Extreame, North and South, no middle Way, or Purgatory for it to fall in. And as Death leaves us, so Judgment will assuredly find us.

He would have proceeded, but she stopt him, saying, *Pray, how long have you been of this Opinion ?*

Gard. Ever since God was pleased to enlighten me with his Grace, to be attentive to his holy Word, and to be guided by it,

Deid. *Was you ever then of the Church of Rome ?*

Gard. In my younger Years I was, but through Mercy, being made sensible by the Scriptures of the Corruptions and Errors of that Church, by the Assistance of a worthy Divine, I hope, with *St. Paul*, nothing shall be able to separate me from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus,

fus. I will not offend your Ladyship's chaste Ears with the History of the Debaucheries and wicked Lives of divers Popes, and most of the Clergy; but will pray Heaven to defend you from either Lust or Revenge. And since I have by a free Confession put my Life in your Hands, I humbly submit it to your Goodness, to——

Here again she interrupted him, and demanded, *Why the Religion he profess'd was called the Protestant Religion?*

To which he replied, As for Being so called, it is to distinguish it from that of the Romish; it came from several Princes and Cities of Germany, who upon the Preachings of good Men, and their exemplary Lives, protested against the Usurpations of the Romish Church and its Errors. That it was no New Doctrine, but the Truth of Primitive Christianity, Confessed, Asserted, and Purged from the Corruptions of Popery, taking the revealed Will of God for its Guide.

At this *Deidamia* paused a while; and then taking his Bible, looked over the sacred Proofs he had turned down in Order; and her Colour went and came so, that he easily perceived her Mind was labouring under some Difficulties, and
so

so giving it him again, she went away without speaking a Word.

This somewhat perplex'd the Gardener, as fearing she was displeased with what he had said; but her sending for him privately to her Chamber the next Morning, under the Notion of bringing her some choice Flowers, banisht all Fear in him; when they two being only left together, she gently led him into the Closet, and shutting the Door to be more private, said, *O Bernard,* (fetching a deep Sigh, your Yesterday's Discourse has much broken my last Night's Rest; I have been meditating on it, and find abundance of Reason in what you say; you have (as *St. Paul* said in another Case) *almost persuaded me to be of your Persuasion*: I wish to God, most virtuous Lady (*replied he*) I might be an humble Instrument in God's Hand, to do any Thing that may redound to his Glory, and the Good and Welfare of your precious and immortal Soul, without hazarding your temporal Quiet and Peace, or exposing you to any Danger; tho' for a *Crown of Life and Immortality*: All earthly Things are to be despised; and the holy Apostle accounts all this World's Good *but as Dross and Dung, in Comparison of enjoying Christ Jesus*. Well, (*said*

(said she) this is my Aim, and if God enable me with his assisting Grace, I hope, through his Mercy, to attain it. I have indeed (continued she) to my great Grief, observed the Loose and Profane Manner of Living of those that profess our Religion; alledging, That a *Confession*, with *Absolution*, and some other Works, will purge them from their Sins, and gain them that Blessedness in the End, which I could never heartily believe they would obtain by them: And since I have more seriously considered God's Word, expressly to the contrary, I cannot believe that any thing but sincere and unfeigned Repentance in the Course of an unspotted Life, can purchase (through the Merits of my Saviour) those endless Glories and transcendent Blessings that God hath promised to poor Mortals. — She would have proceeded, but the falling Tears stopt her Utterance, and Bernard had an inward Rejoycing to see her brought to this pass; whereupon he comforted her with good Advice, and the Cordials of God's Mercies and Promises. In brief, he had made her sensible of the Errors she had been brought up in, and then opened (from Point to Point) the Cheat of pretended Miracles, and Relicks, the
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imposing on People with Pardon and Indulgence to get Money, the Whoredoms, Murders, and Incests of many *Popes, Cardinals, and Prelates* of the *Romish Church*; their Unreasonableness in prohibiting *Priests* Marriage, which is immediately appointed by God, and the allowing them by *Canons* and *Decrees* the Embraces of Concubines, or to commit Adultery, expressly contrary to the Command of the Almighty, for as much as he has expressly said, *Those that do these Things shall not inherit eternal Life.*--- He would have proceeded, but hearing the Sound of Feet coming up Stairs, she hastened him down a back Way with so much Precipitation, that he left his *Bible* behind him, which she luckily seeing, locked up in a *Scrutore*.

I have told you before, That Father *Antonio* the *Priest*, forgetting his Function, Duty, and Distance, gave way to his unruly and lawless Passion, and was then blundering up Stairs to find her in Private, having almost flustered himself with Wine on purpose either to be more confident in his wicked Design, to tell her the Story of his nauseous Love, or rather Lust; or, that if being reprov'd, he might have some slender Excuse for his

his Impertinency, and lay (as too many do) the Blame of their Folly on that which is rather an Aggravation of their Crime, *i. e.* their *Drunkenness*; and so surprising, however he came, that putting his Nose over the Upper-step, just as the Gardener posted out at the private Door, he had a Glimpse of the back Parts of his Garments, as it afterwards appeared; but at that Time took no Notice of any such Thing. *Deidamia* seeing *Antonio* coming towards her in a very pleasant Humour, demanded with a modest Decency, what Occasion brought him thither to disturb her Retirement?

Ah! (said the impudent Priest, who could not long keep down his boiling Passion) your two fair Eyes, sweet Lady, like Load-stones, have drawn me to you; that beauteous tempting Face of yours has made me forget my self, with my Duty to my Lord, and the Trust he reposed in me. Why certainly, said *Deidamia* (calling in her Patience to bridle her Passion) you are beside your self, *Antonio*. — What mean you by this Kind of Discourse? If I am besides my self (replied he almost crying) your fair self is the Cause of it, whose Beauty, like Arrows, have wounded my Heart, and sickned my Brain; I wish I had

had never seen such *Amiableness* in Woman-kind; but since I have been so unfortunate as to be your fetter'd Captive, take some Compassion on me, and ease my Sufferings. What Sufferings? replied *Deidamia*, frowning, or what can be the Sense of all this loose Stuff? Why then, (replied he) to be serious in plain Terms, I love you; and that so passionately, that unless you condescend to make me suitable Returns, I shall have no Peace nor Quiet; but must be miserable and wretched eternally. Then (said she) be you so: What have you seen of any loose misbecoming Behaviour in me, that you should dare to speak thus to me? This, like a Thunder-bolt, struck him Mute; when smoothing her Brows, and growing a little calmer, she said, Come, come, *Antonio*, I took you for another Man; you profess Sanctity, and admonish others to lead a holy Life; is this Pretension then real, or is it only feigned, to try my Virtue? I protest, said he, lifting up both his Hands, it is real, and I cannot help it. Why, said she, would you commit so great Wickedness if you might, and make yourself guilty of a Crime so heinous? Ah! Lady, replied he, if that be all, I can absolve you by the Power given me from the See of Rome.

Consent

Consent but to let me enjoy you, your Penance shall be always easie; I'll get a Dispensation for your Marriage Vows from the Pope, with Pardons, Indulgences, or any Thing, for Sins past, and those that are to come: Nay, I'll do any thing, so I do not fall under your Displeasure: Let me alone for the Rest, and —

This Insolence so much displeased the virtuous Lady, that she could hear no more, nor bear it any longer; but commanded him out of her Presence: Yet could not be rid of him, till she threatened to call up the rest of her Servants. Whereupon he went Muttering away; and for two Days after, as much as possible he could, he shunned coming into her Presence; which much pleased her; for she could not behold him but with Horror and Detestation.

This Attempt however, in one Sense, (through the over-ruling Providence and Goodness of God, who is wonderful in Counsel, and excellent in Working, and can make the greatest Wickedness of his Creatures, serve the Purpose of his own Glory) worked to her Advantage; for she Believed now all true which the Gardener had told her, about the wicked debauched Lives of the Romish Clergy, since this villainous Papist had not scrupled

led to profer the *Pope's* Pardon for no leſs than *Adultery*, and that before it was committed ; by which Means or Encouragement, ſhe plainly ſaw it muſt confequently be that they frequently tempted eaſy and ignorant People to the Commiſſion of many Sins: Therefore ſhe reſolved to leave theſe *blind Guides*, and take the *Word of God* for her *Leader* and *Inſtructor* ; forbearing to come to *Confefſion*, or hear *Maſs*, ſometimes upon Pretence of Indispoſition, and at other Times purpoſely going Abroad, at the uſual Times of either ; and holding ſome other Conferences with the Gardener, which (as to Particulars) for Brevity's Sake I muſt of Neceſſity paſs over.

She found in her ſelf a ſtrange *Averſion* to the *Religion* ſhe had been brought up in ; and having procured a *Bible* in the *French* Tongue, took ſuch Delight in Reading it, that whenever ſhe had Time to Retire, it was not out of her Hand ; yet ſhe kept this as ſecret as poſſible, and not being ready at it her ſelf, got the Gardener to turn her down ſuch Proofs, as were the ſtrongeſt *Argumens* againſt the Errors of *Popery*, and where the *Abomination* of the *Myſtical Babylon* was pointed at. This ſhe joyfully did, and gave Praise to God

wh

who had made him instrumental in so good a Work; tho' he was not ignorant his Life was liable to pay for it, if it were discovered. She likewise laid aside her *Beads* and *Crucifix*, conversed no more with *Rosaries*, or the *Legends of pretended Saints*; and tho' she found some Temptations and Fears at the Beginning, yet frequently praying to God, she overcame Satan's Wiles, and found abundance of Joy and Comfort enlightning her Soul, so that she could not forbear breaking out into Raptures of Praises and Thanksgiving, for the wonderful Change (by so strange and unexpected Means) wrought in her Soul.

Whilst this virtuous Lady and the Gardener held their private Correspondence, in discoursing of the Things of God, and Incouraging and Exhorting each other to Perseverance and Stedfastness in Truth, *Antonio* and *Fronovius*, equally burning with Lustful Desires to enjoy the tender Beauties of the Fair *Deidamia*, were plotting and contriving how their lawless Designs might best be brought about, tho' each plotted by himself, (for as yet they were ignorant of each other's Passion). The villainous Priest (as you have already heard) had been

been Repulsed with Indignation by the chaste Lady, which inwardly tormented him, and brought him almost to his Wits End; but the other (*Fronovius*) had made no Tryal of her Vertues, and waited a favourable Opportunity to do it; and therefore he thinks, meditates, and casts many Things in his Mind, (till at last (his Passion emboldening him) he was resolved to break the Ice with a Letter; and if she took no Notice of that, to second it with his Personal Address: But how he should do this with Privacy and Safety, he was at a Stand for a Time; for he feared to trust any Body to deliver it, lest his Criminal Love should take air, and to deliver it himself, would look too dastardly, as if he was not capable, or at least durst not speak for himself; however, in a little while he met with a fit Opportunity; for *Deidemia* accidentally dropping her Handkerchief, as she passed through a large Gallery that led to her Apartment, he carefully took it up, and folding up his Letter in it (which he had readily sealed by him) he gave it to her Gentlewoman to give it to her Lady, telling her he found it in the Long Gallery. The Gentlewoman knowing the Handkerchief to be her Ladies, immediately

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diately carried it to her, who received it from her, without knowing any thing of a Letter being in it ; and afterwards accidentally taking the Handkerchief out of her Pocket, the Letter dropt out upon the Ground, which she taking up, and looking upon the *Superscription*, was extremely surprized to find it directed to her self ; and hastily opening it, was much more so, to find the *Contents* thereby as followeth :

Pardon me, most lovely Deidamia, if your Beauty makes me forget the Station I am in, and imboldens me to own a Passion I have laboured in vain to hide : To be brief, Dear Lady, I am so captivated by your Charms and singular Perfections, that I am constrained to say, I love you infinitely above all mortal Creatures ; and since it appears to me unreasonable any one Man should Monopolize so inestimable a Treasure, give me leave to hope ; and don't suffer me to Languish and Die, but render the Balm of your Kindness to cure the Wounds which your bright Eyes have made in your otherways wretched Servant,

FRONTINUS.

The Reading of this Letter filled her with Blushes, Anger, and Amazement, at the unparalleled Boldness and Villany of the Author of it, and at first was resolving to commit it to the Flames, or to tear it in Pieces, but upon second Thoughts, she laid it up in her Closet, where she vexed and fretted her self, that she was thus left among such ungrateful Wretches, that dared so much to suspect her Virtues, and measure them by their own wicked and filthy Inclination, as to presume she would defile her Marriage-Bed ; being more grieved for this Discovery, than the former ; for she knew the Priest had something of the Libertine in him, but this Man she had held to be honest and virtuously inclin'd till now ; and to him she thought to have discovered *Antonio's* Folly, if he persisted in it ; that by Shame and Reproofs he might have reclaimed him. But now she scarce knew who to trust ; and could not therefore but tremble at the Apprehensions of some Violence that might be offered her from those Lustful Miscreants, whose Sight now very much displeased her. She thought once or twice of displacing them ; but found their Authority in the Family was so great, that in her Lord's
Absence

Absence she could not do it: Whereupon she fell on her Knees to implore God's Mercy and Protection, commending her self wholly to his Care and Providence, and begging of Him to be her Guardian and Protector.

Though *Deidamia's* Mind on those surprizing Attempts on her Honour, was variously tossed, till at last came to a settled Resolution prudently to conceal what had passed, at least till her Lord came Home, for fear of Scandal and Disturbance: Yet *Fronovius* might well read in her Countenance whenever he came into her Presence, that she had read his Letter, and how she resented it; which made him struggle to overcome his Passion, but in vain; for like Oyl thrown on Fire, the Opposition his lewd Desires met with, made him burn the fiercer; so that he resolved to find an Opportunity to throw himself at her Feet, and discover his Passion to her by Word of Mouth; and whilst he waited for a convenient Time and Place to do it, he perceived the Gardener often to come in and go out very chearful, as highly pleased and contented; and that though he only carried her Fruits and Flowers, yet his Frantick Passion and Jealousie made him

believe there was something more in it. *Antonio* the Priest had also observed the like, and had much the same Sentiments, which emboldened them the more to persist in their wicked and unclean Desires, and to continue to persecute the chaste Lady with their detested Proffers of lawless Love; concluding, that if one of so low a Rank could be in Favour, they in Time could not miss of obtaining what they sought; and so blinded with Passion, and pursuing what they aimed at, (though, as has been said, unknown to each other) they kept a watchful Eye upon the Actions of *Deidamia*, whose Mind was taken up in Contemplating the Divine Perfections of him who is Fairer than the Children of Men, being every Day more confirmed in the Truth of her Religion, blessing and praising God, that by so wonderful and unexpected a Means had brought her out of Darkness and Errors, into the marvellous Light of his Truth, and engaged her Heart to Embrace and Entertain it above her chief Joy; partly looking on the Trouble she had from *Antonio* and *Fronovius*, those Brethren in Iniquity, as Temptations or Tryals to confirm her the more, by overcoming them, in the

Doctrines

Doctrine she had so lately embraced ; in which she firmly resolved to persevere against all Temptations whatever.

But whilst these Things passed, *Fronovius* had received no other Answer to his Letter, but *Deidamia's* angry and much-chang'd Countenance towards him, which he would not take for an absolute Repulse, and therefore was resolved to have her positive Answer : To obtain which, as *Deidamia* was one Morning leaning upon the Window in her Chamber, and looking into the Garden, he stole softly up Stairs, and was got into her Chamber just behind her, before she heard him, when suddenly turning about, and seeing him in a dejected Posture, she was very much surpriz'd, and trembled at the Sight ; whilst he by many Words endeavour'd to shew the Greatness of his Passion ; but having somewhat recollected her Spirits, she with an angry Countenance, spake to him thus : *Why, how now, Fronovius ? What Business have you here, thus to steal into my Chamber unawares ? This is such an Effront Piece of Impudence and Rudeness, as better becomes a Thief than the Steward of my Household ; and yet the filthy Errant that you come on, is far more Criminal than your coming : What have you*

ever seen of Lightness in my Carriage that should make you thus Audacious, or give you the least Hope to succeed in your Unlawful and Wicked Desires? I command you to be gone: And know, that if you persist in your Impudence and Folly, I will speedily take those Methods, that shall issue in your deserved Shame and Confusion.

He would have replied, but she forthwith went out of her Chamber, and would not hear him.

This absolute Denial and severe Reprimand; filled *Fronovius* full of Confusion, and had almost made him hopeless; but after some Recollection, he strongly fancied, that the Opposition he met with, proceeded not from the Lady's Virtue, but from the greater Inclination she had to some Rival, who enjoyed those Favours which he had been pursuing; and he supposed the Gardener to be the Man, because he had received some particular Marks of her Favours since the Departure of the Count *Alanson*. Being thus persuaded, he was resolved (if it were possible) to make a plain Discovery: And to this End, he planted himself privately one Evening near the Back-Stairs, that led out of the Garden into *Deidamia's* Apartment (for that Way he thought his sup-

supposed Rival must come.) And indeed he had not waited long, before a Person came by, and went up those Stairs; whom he softly followed to the Stair-foot; the Darkness of the Night hindered him from discerning who the Person was that went by him, but he doubted not but it was the Gardener, and having listened at the Bottom of the Stairs, hearing no Door open, nor no Key to turn, he imagined the Door was left open on purpose, and therefore resolved to go up himself, and Surprize them in the very Act of their unlawful Love: He had no sooner resolved this, but he heard some Body coming softly down Stairs; so soon as the Person came to the Bottom of the Stairs, *Fronovius* boldly seizes on him, and demands what Business he had there at that late Time of Night? But was extreamly surprized to meet with, instead of *Bernard* the Gardener, *Antonio* the Priest; whom then *Fronovius* thought had been with *Deidamia*. Upon which, speaking big Words to *Antonio*, and threatening to kill him for the Dishonour he had done his Lord, in Violating of his Bed: The poor Priest (who was almost Dead with Fear, and extreamly confounded at this Accident)

tremblingly told *Fronovius*, That if he would save his Life, he would ingeniously tell him all he knew : Which *Fronovius* promising, *Antonio* told him the Story of his Love Addresses, violent Passion, and the Repulses he met with : That however being Jealous of the Gardener, and not finding him in his Lodging) for it seems *Deidamia* had newly appointed him another, unknown to *Antonio*) he suspected he might be with his Lady ; where desiring to Detect him, and bring him to Punishment, he had undertaken to come at this unseasonable Time ; but the Doors being fast locked, and after a long Listening, hearing no Stir nor Whispering, was returning back again to watch a more favourable Opportunity, that he might not on slight Ground or Uncertainty, lay such a Thing to their Charge.

Fronovius finding the Priest had been Repulsed and Reproved as well as he, and that his Thoughts were the same with his as to the suspected Rival, having hushed his present Fears, and declar'd to him though somewhat darkly, his own Affections, &c. They went to *Antonio's* Chamber, where they entered into a Combination so Hellish and Malicious

cious, that it brought many Woes and Miseries, both to the Virtuous *Deidamia*, and the Gardener, till by the Mercy of God, to the Shame and Confusion of the Contrivers, they were turned to Blessings, to rejoyce the injured, and clear their Innocence, after many inexpressible Sufferings.

Whilst these wicked Men were thus Plotting to Revenge their Repulses, *Deidamia* was thoughtful of her Safety: Sometimes she determined to Write to *Alanson*, to remember his Promise and hast his Return; but then she concluded, that though his Presence might reform these Disorders, yet to desert his Command upon any private Occasion, would derogate from his Honour; and then she considerd, that she could not hide from him the Religion she had embraced since his Departure, for she could not dissemble if she was taxed with it; and tho' his Company were dear to her, yet the Enjoyment of the other was more precious and preferable; and that in Comparison of the Love of Christ, all the Love in the World was but of little Value. At another Time she thought of retiring to her Parents: But this she fancied would be displeasing to her Lord,

that in his Absence he should leave the Government of his Family, which he had trusted to her Care at his Departure; these Things seriously Weighed, she resolved to remain at Home, thinking Time would cure the wild Disorders that were in the Minds of those two wicked Servants.

After this last Resolve, she retired to her Closet, where she had not been long e'er the Gardener came to present her with a Paper he had drawn up by her Order, of the Fundamental Points of the Protestant Religion, in Opposition to Popery, one being compared with the other, and tryed by Scripture and the Fathers of the Primitive Times: She accepted this Paper very kindly, promising to look it over at her Leisure, as a Matter she had much desired to be informed in. Whereupon he retired to his Labour in the Garden, whilst a bribed Spie, their Enemies had set on the Watch, was run giving Information of the Gardener's being with his Lady; *Fronovius* was out of the Way, but *Antonio* hastened as fast as he could, and softly opening the Spring-Lock, impudently entered the Chamber, drawing the Curtains of her Bed, in Hopes of finding what he looked for

for there ; but missing his Purpose, he stole to the Side of her Closet, directed thither by her Voice ; for the pious Lady was fallen on her Knees, and fervently pouring out her Soul to God in these Words :

O Most blessed God, who art the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Consolations, I bless and Praise thy holy Name, that thou hast enlightened the Eyes of my Understanding with the Knowledge of thy blessed Truth, and that thou hast delivered me from that Darkness and Ignorance, and these Antichristian Errors, wherein I have lived since my Childhood, and hast revealed the Saving Knowledge of thy Will unto me, as it is contained in thy blessed Word the Holy Scriptures : O strengthen my Heart in the Profession of thy Truth, and grant I may never return back again to the Popish Idolatry and Superstition, nor be under the Conduct of those blind Guides any more, whatever Sufferings and Tryals I may be liable to, or may undergo on that Account.

These pious Breathings of her Soul, Antonio to his great Amazement heard, and knew not what to think, whether he should discover himself or retire ;
but

but at last wickedly supposing the Fear she should conceive, lest he should discover what she had uttered against the *Romish Religion*, or that, as he concluded, she was turned *Hugenot* (as they call *Protestants*) might induce her to comply with his Lust, he presented himself before her, rudely opening her Closet Door e're she had Time to rise from her Knees. This continued Impudence of his much troubled her Spirits; whereupon, rising hastily, she forcibly pulled the Door after she had given him a Thrust-back, and lock'd her self in. However, it unhappily fell out, that in this Disorder, not taking that Care, as at another Time she would have done, that Paper which the Gardener had newly brought her, with her hasty shutting the Door dropt out of her Coat, and unperceived by her, was shut out of the Closet, which *Antonio* took carefully up, and put in his Pocket, telling her (tho' the Door was shut against him) he had heard how she Apostatized from her Religion, and how wickedly she had spoken of the holy *Roman Catholick Church*, and what Mischiefs he could do her, if he should discover it; yet for the Love he bore her, if she would yield to ease his Passion, it should be buried

in

in eternal Oblivion: But if she refused, he had now got an Opportunity to ruin her.

The pious Lady, (whose fervent Devotions this Wretch had interrupted) bridled, as much as Human Frailty could do, her Passion, Commanding him in mild Terms to be gone, and not wound her chaste Ears with his hated Discourse: Against the Injury he threatened her, she trusted in God for Protection, who is a strong Tower, for the Safety of all those that fly unto him; and she doubted not, when she had an Opportunity to make her Lord sensible of it, he would, through the Favour of Almighty God, concur with her, in her Opinion.

Antonio finding himself disappointed in his main Expectation, and thoroughly nettled with this Answer, particularly the Conclusion of it, went away, Threatning and Muttering to himself: And in the Anti-chamber met *Fronovious*, who upon later Notice was hastening to him, to whom he had told all that he had seen and heard. This made them consult to take new Measures; and in Conclusion, resolved her Chastity or Life should be sacrificed to their Revenge. This was

no sooner concluded on, but *Antonio* remember'd the Paper he had taken up, and taking it out of his Pocket, knew it to be the Gardener's Hand, and at first supposing it to be a Love-Letter that might discover the Intrigue between him and his Lady, was highly pleas'd; but he had scarce read it half over, e're he found such weighty Arguments against the Church of *Rome*, levell'd so directly against her tottering Foundation, as not only puzzled his Understanding, but made him storm at a strange Rate: Whereupon *Fronovius* took it out of his Hand, and read the rest, and in the Close, these Words, viz. *Virtuous Lady, these Arguments, Pro & Contra, I submit to your great Wisdom, being very joyful in having, under God, been a poor Instrument in Enlightning your Understanding, to discern Truth from Falsehood.*

This left them no longer in doubt who the Party was that (as they term'd it) had traduc'd her to Apostatize, and become Heretick, and for this consequence to enjoy Favours she denied them; whereupon they vowed a bloody Revenge. But fearing that the Love *lanson* bore her, would not be effaced

the Change of her Religion, especially when he should come to understand their Criminal Passion for her, and Practices against her, They resolved to make her Parents bear the Blame of that Stupendous Wickedness, which they themselves designed to be the Actors of: For they knew that her Parents were extraordinarily Bigotted to the *Romish Church*, and so where the likeliest to deal with in this Matter: Whereupon *Antonio* immediately posted to them, and desiring a private Conference with the Father and Mother; after many Hypocritical Shews of Sorrow for the Disgrace that would befall the Family, he declared how his Lady (since his Lord had been absent) had been perverted from the *Catholick Religion* by a *Hugenot* a Heretick Gardener, a Fugitive Wretch, that had been taken in some Years ago upon Charity. He urged what Dishonour it would be to their Family, the Danger incurred by the King's Edicts; and lastly, the Loss of her Soul, if she was not timely recovered and brought to the right Fold, from whence she had perversly strayed. Then he began to magnifie the pious Care and Pains he had taken to keep her in the right

right way, and to prevent her falling into such an unpardonable Sin; but that the Devil had been too hard for his Industry and Labours, through God's high Sufferance, to bring some great Judgment on her, for her Haughtiness and Contempt, &c.

This being delivered in a Tone very moving and passionate, seeming altogether in Piety to *Deidamia*, made her Father Sigh, and the Old Lady burst out in Tears, wringing their Hands, and bewailing the Miseries of their Aged Years, in this (as they then termed it) worst of Misfortunes that could befall them; that the only Branch of their Family that should convey it to Posterity, had made her self a Cast-away, for so in their passionate Mood they expressed her to be. *Antonio* was glad to see them thus wrought, and the Storm of their first Grief spending it self, and being allayed by falling Tears, they began to consult more maturely how this Misfortune might be Reversed, and after many Things were Debated, *Antonio's* Device of Lodging her in a Nunnery (where she might be restrained from *Heretick* Books, as he said, and the Company of any Seducers,

ducers, and also be instructed by Virtuous Nuns, till her Lord came Home, and determin'd what might farther be done in it) was approved.

What was to be done with the Gardener was the next Thing to be consulted, whether to make him away secretly, or deliver him up to Justice; the Priest was for the Former, but the Parents Consciences, was tender in that, and could not consent to such a Wickedness; but *Antonio* alledged, That the whole Business would be made publick if he were delivered up to Justice, and their Daughter would be brought in as Criminal, and perhaps for her Obstinacy her Lord might loose his Honours and Preferments at Court. This made them consider farther, and at last left it to the wicked Priest, or those he should appoint, to do, as he or they pleased. They would have born him Company to *Alanfon's* House to see what their Persuasions might do, but he urged it would only be a Means to discover the Matter; and that it would be the best for them to come and moderate Things when the Count came Home, of which he would give them the first Notice, since at present

sent what was to be done required Secrecy ; that in the mean Time she should be provided for as became her Quality ; and that such a Place as he mentioned, with Time and Company, was the best Cure to jostle those wild Notions out of her Head : Upon which they only sent her a Letter, and resolved not to go themselves. So *Antonio* returned well satisfied to his wicked Companion.

Deidamia (who was ignorant of this) missing her Paper, and not doubting which Way it went, taking more Care for *Bernard* the Gardener than her self, thought by it he would be discovered ; wherefore she sent for him, gave him a Handful of Gold, and commanded him to shift for himself ; telling him what had passed, and the Danger he was in. This Command he seemed exceeding loth to obey, and, with Tears in his Eyes, protested, that for the Sake of his Religion, and in her Defence against any Injury or Violence, he was willing to expose his Life : But she urged so many Things to hasten his Departure, that he promised to do it ; and so they (with shedding many Tears (took a long Farewel of each other.

Bernard

re. Bernard was preparing to depart, as An-
 be tonio returned with his Orders; where-
 and upon Fronovius clapped him up in a
 ich Dungeon, and that Night hired two
 ure Ruffians to carry him to the Sea-Clifts,
 her and throw him thence Head-long; and
 her thither they carried him in a Sack on a
 em- Horse, Gagged and Bound; but finding
 fied a Vessel thrust into a Creek very near the
 Clifts, one of them enquired and found
 his) it belonging to a French Plantation in the
 ing West-Indies; whereupon they took the
 Care Method of Joseph's Brethren with the
 self, Ishmaelites, to make the best Purchase of
 ed; him, rather than destroy him and lose
 m a it; so he that came to enquire demand-
 him ed of the Master, *If he wanted a lusty Ser-*
 what vant? He told him, *Yes*; then he return-
 ed, and took the Gardener out of the
 in Sack, ungagged and unbounded him, and
 cloth told him, That though he deserved to
 Eyes, Die for perverting his Lady to Heresie,
 Re- yet they had Compassion upon him, and
 any would only send him to do Penance, for
 g to Slave in the *West-Indies*, and bid him
 many accept of it Thankfully, and without
 at he Muttering, and thereupon they delivered
 with him to the Master of the Vessel, of whom
 Fare they received Twelve Crowns. After
 which

which they returned, and gave an Account they had thrown him with a great Stone about his Neck from a Fifty Foot Cliff into the Sea, and for it received the Reward promised them. Nor was *Bernard* unwilling to go with his unknown Master; finding Providence had changed the Death that was designed him, only into Slavery, from whence he might Hope in Time to be released. But his Care was greater for *Deidamia* than himself, for he had been used to Misfortunes and inured to several Hardships. And her Grief was no less, that she found herself constrained (as she supposed for his Safety) so abruptly to part with the Man that had been an Instrument in the filling her Heart so full of heavenly Comforts; and had not laid her Commands on him to write to her, or other ways give her secret Notice of his Abiding Place (that she might have had farther Converse with him, and been more Strengthened by him in the Profession of that Truth he had instructed her in, and which she was resolved to abide by) till she found Means to restore him to his Place again.

While

Whilst she was pensive on these Thoughts, *Antonio* having (as I before told you) gotten a Letter from her Parents to her, wherein they laid their Commands on her till her Lord's return, as she tender'd the Favour of Almighty God, their Blessing, and her own Honour and Safety, to be Ruled and Guided in all Things by her Spiritual Pastor. (So, being ignorant of his Villany, they termed this wicked Priest.) And whatever he perswaded her to for the Good of her Soul, and Bodily Preservation, readily to comply with it; to whose Care and Integrity, next to the Heavenly Protection, they heartily recommended her till her Lord and Husband came Home: This was Signed by both of them. And *Antonio* having consulted *Fronovius* about it, they both came boldly to her Apartment, when they knew she was in Private, and presented to her, Charging her to obey it as she tendered her Safety: She no sooner looked on it, but she asked them so many Questions, that by *Antonio's* Replies, she was not sensible, they had traduced her to her Parents; and after some just Reproaches, told them, it should not be long, before she would go and Plead her own Cause, and doubted not so to justify her Proceedings to her

her Parents, that the black Villany of her base and treacherous Accusers should be unable to sully the Brightness of her Innocence. This at first startled them; but being resolved to proceed in their wicked Designs, they plainly told her, *She was at their Disposal, and that they had Orders to carry her to a Nunnery, where she should be Honourably Used, but debarred from the Destructive Principles she had lately imbibed, till her* and their Lord returned, to take the Matter into his own Hands, and determin'd how he pleased to dispose of her.

This insufferable Impudence of these lustful Wretches, stirred up her Zeal to so much holy Anger and Detestation of what they proposed, that she in a great Passion protested to *Dye a Thousand Deaths if it were possible, and by the more exquisite Torments their Hellish Malice could invent rather than to be inclosed within the Walls of a Nunnery, which she was satisfied was other than a Sink of Sin and plausible Colour for Lewdness and Debauchery.* But without replying, offering to force her from the Closet, she opposed her Strength against their Rudeness, crying out for Help to the rest of her Servants; but *For-* novius, who was the Steward and Govern-

for of the Family, had so ordered the Matter, that those that immediately waited upon her, were then out of hearing: So that without any other interruption, than what her Contending gave them, they hurried her into a close chamber in the remotest Part of the House, where they Locked her in, and went to consult farther, how they should secretly convey her from thence, whilst she who expected after such Treatment, nothing but a Violation of her Chastity, and would much rather have embraced Death, and counting it a Favour) was pouring out of her Soul to God, and imploring his Help in that needful Time of her Trouble, and begging of him to strengthen her Faith, till on a sudden, to allay the Troubles and Afflictions of her Mind, such Beams of Joy and Comfort were darted into her Soul, that she assured her self, *That that merciful God, whose gracious Protection she had been seeking, would work out Deliverance for her in Time.*

These Conspirators by this Time had come to a Result to rid themselves (as they thought) for ever from the Fears they were in of their Villanous Practices being discovered; which was this.

Fro-

Fronovius Counterfeited a Letter in Arlanson's Hand so very exactly, that if himself had seen it, he might have been puzzled to distinguish it from his own, and having got two Russians ready, one dressed in the Habit of an Officer, and the other like a Servant attending him; Antonio and his Companion in Wickedness went to her with it, and falling on their Knees, with some forced Tears, humbly imploring her Pardon for the Indignities they had offered to her, beseeching her to be their good Lady, notwithstanding their Follies, and they would never in the like Nature offend, nor do any thing to disoblige her; with many other Protestations, and much feigned Sorrows for their Rudeness and Designs upon her Chastity, imploring her not to discover it to her Lord.

Whilst Deidamia was wondering what that sudden Alteration in those who had lately so Rudely treated her, might mean, Fronovius deliver'd her the Letter, which she read these Words;

My Dear Deidamia,
TH O' I know, that the News of these Lines will acquaint you with, will not be acceptable to you, yet Conjure you to our mutual Affections, that you suffer not

self to be disturbed, but hear what I shall
tell you with that Patience and Serenity of
Mind, which becomes you, as knowing it is
your Duty in all Things that happen to us, to
submit to the Divine Will. Know then, my
Lovely Deidamia, that in a late Encounter
with a Party of the Enemies, I happened to
be wounded by a Chance-shot, which my Sur-
geons tell me is Mortal; and fearing that it
may be so, and desiring above all Things here
below, to have a Sight of your dear Self be-
fore I depart out of the World, I have sent
the Bearer, Mons. Durell, one of my Cap-
tains, to conduct you to me forthwith: Who
is a Person of that Worth and Honour, that
you may trust your self with him without the
Trouble of any Attendants but what he brings
with him, because I would have you come as
speedily as may be: Which is at present all
from him, who is both in Life and Death.

Your ever Faithful Husband

Charlery,
July 12.
1693.

D'ALANSON.

At the Reading of this she Trembled,
looked Pale, and shed abundance of Tears,
being in the greatest Disorder and Con-
fusion imaginable, intreating instantly to

D

see

see the Party that brought it, promising (on their renewing their Intreaties) not to discover their Wickedness, if by their future Demeanour they made an Amendment for what had passed ; and they thereupon solemnly promising it, led her down into the Hall, where the pretended Captain and his Servant bowed very low to her ; and being before-hand instructed answered all her Questions so cunningly that she verily believed the Letter to come from her Lord, and that all he said was true, desiring them to refresh themselves, whilst she fitted her self with other Apparel, and took some Jewels, Gold, &c. along with her ; which done, and being about Four in the Evening, the innocent Dove committed her self into the Talons of these bloody Vultures, mounting behind the supposed Captain, who had his Instructions not to let her see the next Morning Dawn. *Antonio* and *Fronovius* pretended much Sorrow at her Departure, but inwardly rejoiced, that by this Stratagem they should get her easily into the Trap without Noise or Disturbance which had they gone about to do by Force, her Cries might have brought Rescue, and prevented their villanous Purpose

Purpose: The cursed Priest indeed would have first had her Ravished by himself and his Companion, and then Murthered at Home, but the other considering, that it would be difficult to dispose of the Dead Body, contrived this Way. But I must leave them for some Time, hugging themselves in their Security, and follow the deceived Innocent.

The bloody Cut throats having got the Prize, by her too much Credulity, into their Possession, took all the By-ways they could, crossing the Country, and holding her in Discourse with many Things relating to the War, and so spun out the Time till the Sun was near setting, when coming into a Vally between two vast Woods, in a Place much unfrequented, they rode into one of them, at a Turning of a narrow Way, where the supposed Captain stopped, and the Russian that rode single alighted, and surprizingly pulled *Deidamia* from behind him, who at so unexpected a Rudeness trembled, and began to suspect the Treachery; nor was the other slow in Dismounting, when both together they carried her into the Wood; upon this, with piteous Skrieks and Cries, she demanded *the Cause of such*
D 2 *Violence;*

Violence ; but without replying, the Villain who had carried her, drawing his Sword, directed it for the fatal Thrust, designing instantly to pierce her Heart ; whilst on her Knees she was imploring their Pity and Compassion, and intreating to know in what she had offended, to make them so void of Humanity towards a distressed Lady, whom they had betrayed into that Solitary Place, being convinced that her Lord had given no such Commands : No, (replied they) that's true, nor do we know him ; but Antonio and Fronovius have, and we must obey them ; besides, you are an Heretick, and ought not to live.

Deidamia now finding she was betrayed by her wicked Servants into the Hands of these merciless Villains ; and seeing nothing but present Death before her Eyes, she poured out her Soul to God in Vehement Petitions for her Favour from his Hands, and that if he saw fit she should Live no longer here, that he would receive her into Life Eternal, and that rather (if it were required) she might Seal her Profession of the Reformed Religion, in which she had found so much heavenly Consolation, with her dearest Blood, than be prevailed with to Recant it. But

thou

thou, O Lord, (said she) who deliveredst Daniel from the Fury of the Lions, and the Three Children from devouring Flames, canst, if thou wilt, in this great Extremity, deliver me from these Blood-thirsty Men, whom I have no manner injured: But be it as thou pleasest, so that my departing Soul, when it Leaves this mortal Body, may find shelter in the Arms of thy Mercy. The Villains, who all this while had eyed her, and saw her Lovely in her Tears, troubled not themselves about her Religion, for their Business was to Murder her; and therefore the pretended Captain said, *Lady! our Time is short, this Instant you must Die, therefore settle your Mind for the fatal Stroke:* To this she made no Reply, but continuing on her Knees, with Eyes up-lifted to Heaven, Sighs and Tears being the Language of her Soul, his impious Hand was about to give the fatal Thrust; but the other caught hold of his Arm, and stopt his Sword; and after that, they Whispered; but she knew not what they said, till their farther Attempt revealed it.

They had no sooner done conferring Notes, but they violently forced her on her Back, and prepared to Ravish her,

first, and then put her to Death: Her Cries upon this were redoubled, and she begged Death rather than the Loss of her Chastity, opening her Bosom, and tempting their Swords to pierce it. But her Beauty in this sorrowful Condition was so charming in their lustful Eyes, that they were inexorable to her Cries and Prayers. O had *Alausen* been but there, with what Vengeance at this piteous Sight would his Sword have been drawn to their Destruction, and her Rescue! But he being ignorant of the Wounds his dear Lady was about to receive, Heaven interposed for her Rescue: For the Villains fell at Discord, who should first enjoy her; and the Contest grew so hot, that they disputed it with their Swords, and in the Duel the pretended Captain (most forward in the Mischief) was ran through the Body, and with a ghastly Groan yielded up his wicked Soul into the Hands of Death. The other being forely wounded, and Fainting through loss of Blood, gave *Deidamia* Time to fly farther into the Woods, wandering so far that Night covering every Thing with Darkness, she thought she might now rest a little to recover Breath; and
so

so sat down upon the Ground : Tho' the Dangers she had so lately escaped from wicked Men, and those that she now feared from wild Beasts, would not a long Time suffer her to close her Eyes ; however she ceased not with earnest Prayer an Supplication to recommend her self to God, and implore his Aid and Protection ; who by the late wonderful Deliverance he had given her, had sufficiently shown her how able he is to save to the utmost, even in the midst of the greatest Dangers. The Consideration whereof, was a mighty allay to her present Sorrows in the midst of that forlorn Condition, to which she was reduced ; so that a little supported thereby, she fell at last into a sound Sleep, having no other Pillow but a Turff of Grass, nor Covering than the Canopy of Heaven. The Morning being come, *Deidamia* again returned Thanks to God, both for her late Deliverance, and her last Nights Preservation ; earnestly begging of him, That as he had graciously begun to deliver her, so that he would in his own good Time compleat it, to his own Glory and her Good ; and, that tho' at present her Afflictions are not Joyous but Grie-

vous, yet, that through God's over-ruling Providence, they might afterwards bring forth for her the peaceable Fruits of Righteousness; humbly desiring, she might be kept from entertaining hard Thoughts of God, or of his Truth and Ways, which she had so lately embraced, notwithstanding any Sufferings she had or might meet withal upon that Account. And having thus recommended herself to God, she resolved, if it were possible, to get out of that Desolate, Pathless, and Solitary Place: But the more she thought to extricate her self, the more she found her self entangled, and without Hopes of getting out. The Fruits, that at that Time of the Year grew upon the Trees, supply'd her with Food; and the little purling Streams that issued from some Springs in the Wood, supply'd her with Drink: So that finding it impossible to get away, she was Content to tarry there, till the Providence of God should find out some Way of Deliverance for her; being satisfied in this, That the Comforts of Conversation, and other Conveniences that she us'd to have, were abundantly made up in the Communion she enjoy'd with God, whose blessed Presence

(as

(as she has since confess'd) did more than Recompense for all her outward Wants... In the Profession of which Happiness we will leave her for a Time, and look back to see what became of the surviving Ruffian.

His Companion (as we have already heard) was killed in their Contest, about which should Enjoy (or rather Ravish) *Deidamia* first, and he that survived fainted away thro' Loss of Blood, which (as we have already related) made Way for *Deidamia*'s Escape: But he recovering in some little Time, found Means to stop its Effusion; and then missing of *Deidamia*, he made what Search he could for her, not so much to satisfy his Lust, (which his loss of Blood had pretty much allayed) as to take away her Life, that in Time to come she might not be an Evidence of his Wickedness; but not finding her after all his Search, he buried his Companion, and returned to those that had set them to Work, telling them, That *Deidamia*, when she found she must Die by a Surprise, had snatch'd away his Companions Sword, and Slain him with it by an unlook'd for Thrust: But that himself had quickly reveng'd it by her own Death, and had buried

them both in a deep Pit to avoid Discovery. This they believed, and gave him what they had promised; being mightily pleased that now they were (as they thought at least) out of all Danger.

Whilst these Things were thus acted, *Deidamia's* Parents being exceedingly troubled, even to that Degree, that their Sleep departed from them; and those little Slumbers, that they sometimes got, were interrupted with strange and unaccountable Dreams, which was also attended with an unusual Melancholy, of which they could give no Account. This made them resolve to enquire after *Deidamia*, of whom they heard nothing, since the Permission they gave to *Antonio* to carry her to a Nunnery.

But *Fronovius* and *Antonio* had been so Cunning to prevent their Discovery of the Villany, that for a Sum of Money they engaged a certain Abbess of *Antonio's* Acquaintance, to acknowledge (when there should be Occasion) that *Deidamia* had been brought thither, but that she had made her Escape from thence, so that she knew not what was become of her, nor could give any Account of the Reason of it, but only by a Note that she had

had left behind her in her Chamber, which Note *Fronovius* (who, as we have already said had a Notably Faculty at Counterfeiting of Hands) had Writ in a Hand so like *Deidamia's*, that it could not be distinguished. They had also given the Abbess a Ladder of Ropes, by which it was pretended, she had made her escape. *Fronovius* and *Antonio* having so well laid their Design with the Abbess, kept Possession of *Alanson's* House without Fear or Controul. And therefore when *Deidamia's* Parents came thither to enquire after their Daughter, they received them with much seeming Courtesie and Kindness, and *Fronovius* told them, *That tho' it had Unhappily fallen out, that their Lady had been Perverted to Heresie since the Departure of the Count her Husband, yet he had taken that Care of the Family in his Lord's Absence, which was consistent with his Duty; and that as to his Lady, the Orders they had been pleas'd to give to Antonio to send her to a Nunnery had been punctually observ'd; and he hoped by that Means, against the coming Home of their Lord, she might be again reconciled unto her Mother-Church, out of which there is no Salvation. Tho' this Discourse of Fronovius was very plausible, yet the*
Parents

Parents of *Deidamia* were not at all satisfied with it, but desired to see and discourse with her in the *Nunnery* where she was, which *Fronovius* seemed ready to assent to, and with *Antonio* offered their Service to accompany them thither, telling them, they had given so strict a Charge to the Abbess, to prevent any *Hereticks* from coming to her, that none might be admitted to speak with her, but themselves, or by their immediate Order.

The Parents being for the present satisfied with this Answer, lay there that Night, big with the Hopes they had of seeing their Daughter the next Day : Which being come, they went with *Antonio* and *Fronovius*, to the *Nunnery*, but were extreemly surprized, when they came thither, to hear the Abbess say, That the young Lady had been too hard for her, and notwithstanding all her Care and Diligence, had found a Way to make her Escape but the Day before, and then led them into the Garden, shewing them the Ladder of Ropes by which she got over the Wall ; and then having them into a Room which she called her Chamber, gave them the Note which *Fronovius* left with her, asking her Parents if they knew that Hand ;

The French Convert.

77

Hand; they hastily opened it, and thought verily it had been of *Deidamia's* Writing: And then Reading it, found it to contain these Words.

HAVING been forced to this Place against my Mind and Conscience, let none be troubled, that I have found a Means to set myself at Liberty: And am gone to him, who no doubt will Right me of the Injury done me by my Treacherous Servants.

Deidamia.

Her Parents upon reading this Letter and believing it to be True, burst forth into Tears for the Loss of their Daughter, not knowing now in what Part of the Country to seek for her: The only Hopes they had was, that she was gone into *Flanders* to her Husband, to which Opinion *Fronovius* and *Antonio* both perswaded them, from that Expression in the Note, (*I am gone to him, that will right my Injuries.*) Upon which, giving *Fronovius* a Charge to be a faithful Steward in his Lord's Absence, they returned to their own House, where they writ the following Letter to the Count, and sent it by an Express to *Flanders*.

To

To the Count D'Alanson, Coll. of
the Regiment of Picardy.

Dearest SON,

IT is not without Unexpressible Grief that we Write these Lines, which brings you the sad Tydings of the greatest Affliction that ever befel you; and which, without the Divine Aid, you will find it very hard to bear; but I hope Heaven will support you under it; it is in brief, the loss of Deidamia; I do not mean by Death, for had Heaven ordain'd it so, that would have been far more Eligible: But, alas! She is lost both to her self and all of us; She is (since your Departure) perverted to Heresie, and turned an obstinate Huguenot; which whilst we endeavoured to Reclaim her from, by consenting upon the Advice of your Chaplain, Father Antonio) that she should be put into an Nunnery, she is escaped from thence no one knows whither; the Thoughts thereof has filled the Hearts of my self and Wife with such Unexpressible Grief and Sorrow, as has render'd us altogether Unconsolable, our only remaining Hope is, that she may be gone to you; and that if you have not already, you may yet hear of her in a few Days; for she left be-
hind

bind her in her Chamber, at the Nunnery of St. Bridget's (whither Fronovius and Antonio conducted her) the following Note.

HAVING been forced to this Place against my Mind and Conscience, let none be troubled that I found a Means to set my self at Liberty: And am gone to him who no doubt will Right me of the Injury done me by my Treacherous Servants,

Deidamia.

It is this Note alone that gives us ground to hope that you may see her again; and I Pray God it may fall out accordingly. And whenever this lost Sheep shall be found again, I doubt not but you will lay her in your Bosom, according to the Example of our great Shepherd, and by your wonted Love and Tenderness towards her, endeavour to restore her again to the true Fold and Church of Christ; to whose holy Protection I commit you, and so Farewel.

J. MONTAIGN.

The Count *Alanson* was so transported with Grief at the Reading of this Letter, that for some Time he remain'd Speechless:

His

His Trouble was too great to Vent it self in Words ; still Waters being always the Deepest : But soon after his Sorrow gave it self Vent in the most passionate and feeling Complaints : And then calling for a Pen and Ink, he writ the following Letter to his Father.

Alanfon, to Sieur Montaign.

S. I. R.,

I Received your Letter, the Contents where-
of has brought that Grief and Sorrow to
my Heart, that will continue there for ever,
unless the Sight of my dearest Deidamia re-
moves it : Her being turned Huguenot is not
that which gives me much Trouble, it rather
makes me think there is something of Good in
those Opinions, or else so much Goodness and
Virtue, as that of Deidamia's, could never
have embraced them. Had you but let her
alone in my House I had been happy still ; but
your endeavouring to reclaim her has been the
Ruin of us both : I am so Transported with
Grief and Anger, that I know not what to
Write, nor would I Write at all, but come
away immediately, were it not for the Hopes
you give from the Note found in the Chamber
of my dearest Deidamia, that she was gone to
him that would soon Right her Injuries, and
that.

that can be none but my self : And might I but recover her again, she should not be mistaken in her Thoughts. 'Tis in Hopes of her coming that I am content to stay here a little longer : For 'tis Deidamia alone can make me Happy. Farewell. ALANSON.

The Messenger being returned with *Alanson's* Letter, it administred fresh Grief to *Deidamia's* Parents. For they thereby found, that by their too easily yielding to *Antonio's* Designs, they had not only lost their Daughter, but the Affections of their Son-in-Law. In this State we will not leave them, and make *Deidamia* a Visit in her sorrowing Solitude.

Deidamia being in that lonely Place, each Day removed her Habitation, until at last she found a Cave to secure her self from the Injuries of the Weather, and was a quiet Resting-place to her in the Night-season, for by shutting up the Mouth of the Cave, she covered her self from all Danger ; which she look'd upon, and thanked God for, as a great Mercy : And living upon the Fruits that grew in the Wood, (as I said before) she spent her Time wholly in Prayer and Meditation ;

tion ; and tho' her Diet and Lodging was extreemly changed, yet her Health was both continued and increased, and she found that Promise made good to her, *As thy Day is, so shall thy Strength be.*

She had now lived almost four Months in this Solitude, and the Winter approaching, began to make the Woods uncomfortable ; and the Cold extreemly nipping: So that *Deidamia* was forced often to walk apace to get her heat. One Day as she had walked farther than Ordinary, she discovered some Kind of an Obsure Path she had not seen before, and tho' she knew not whither it would lead her, she was resolved to follow the Track: She travelled so far that Day, that it was in Vain for her to think of retreating to her beloved Cave, where she had lain so many Nights ; and therefore making the best Shift that she could, she sat down upon the Ground, and Recommending her self to the Almighty's Protection, composed her self to Rest ; the next Morning she arose as soon as it was Light, and travelling forward, perceived her Path to be like that of the *Just*, which the wise Man tells us, *Shines more and more unto the perfect Day* : And she was en-

encouraged to go on, because she fancied she heard the Barking of Dogs; and after travelling a little farther, she was well assured it was a real Thing, and not a Fancy only; and therefore she pursued her Journey the more eagerly. The Sun had not come to its Meridian, when she heard an unusual Rushing amongst the Bushes, and standing still to know what it might mean, she perceived a Grave Old Man with two Dogs following him, come from among the Trees. They were both alike Surpriz'd at the Interview; for the Old Man having never seen any Human Creature in that Place before, could not but be amazed to see a Woman coming from the midst of the Wood; and therefore addressing himself to her, he enquired by what Misfortune she came thither? Intreating her not to be afraid, for she should receive no Harm from him: *Deidamia* upon this looking Earnestly upon him, and perceiving his Carriage and Demeanour to be what became the Gravity of his Years, she told him, *She was indeed in a wild Place, and knew not the Way out again.* To this the Old Man reply'd, *If she would go with him to his homely Cottage, his Wife would conduct her out of* the

the Wood. Deidamia presently accepted of his Kindness and went with him. And after they had gone about the Space of a Mile, they came to his House ; where the good Old Woman (who was somewhat surprized to see her Husband bring a Stranger along with him) rose up, and received her very Courteously, desiring her to sit down, and refresh herself with such homely Fare as their Cottage afforded : Which she did, and then asking her farther how she came into that Place. Deidamia desired they would ask her no Questions for the Repetition of her Sorrow would but renew her Grief ; only thus much she would let them know, that her being there Alive was the Effects of God's Providence in delivering her from Wicked and Blood-thirsty Aden that sought to take away her Life. Upon which, perceiving her to be full of Grief, they asked her no more Questions, but finding her very weary, they led her into a homely but clean Apartment, to repose her self upon the Bed : Deidamia was mighty thoughtful what this Aged Couple might be ; and whether or no for her Apparel's sake, and that Gold, and those Jewels she had about her, she might not fall into great a Danger as that

that she had formerly escaped, and tho' she was at first glad of their Company, she could have wished herself in her beloved Cave again. But her Fears were quickly over, when by a *French* Bible and other good Books, she found in her Room, and by the hearty Prayers of the good Old Man at Night, she perceived they were *Hugenots*, who had flown into that solitary Retirement for the sake of their Religion: This made her be much more free with them, blessing God for his Providence in bringing her thither, and resolving to continue there, till she could meet with an Opportunity to return Home into the Arms of her Dearest *Alan-son*: And the Old Couple having understood her History more fully, by their Pity and Commiseration, made her Abode with them more easie. And the Communion she had with them in the Things of another World, weaned her from this in a great Measure. So that here she took up her Abode, and continued with them, not only that Winter, but the Year following, until she was found out by her beloved *Alan-son*, to whom it is Time that we now Return.

The

The Count *Alanson* having tarried at the Camp a whole Month after the receiving of his Father-in-Law's Letter, in expectation of seeing his dearest *Deidamia*; began now to be impatient of tarrying any longer; and indeed, during all that Time, he was so much changed in his Carriage, Humours, and Conversation, that all those with whom he us'd to converse in the Camp, took Notice of it, he having abandoned himself to an extreme Melancholy; therefore desiring of the King to go Home, both for the Recovery of his Health, and for the settling some Affairs in his Family, he soon obtained it, and soon after (tho' with a heavy Heart) arrived there. Where his first Business was to enquire after *Deidamia*; but none of the Servants could give an Account of her but *Fronovius* and *Antonio*, who gave him the same Account that had been sent him by his Father-in-Law. To which he Sternly asked them, How they durst dispose of their Lady and Mistress contrary to her Will, without his Consent and Knowledge? Telling them, He feared the Note she had written, it was their Treachery that was the Occasion of her Loss; which if he could but be confirmed in, he would

take Care they should receive a Punishment
 suitable to the greatness of their Crimes. At
 which *Fronovius* and *Antonio* began to
 Tremble, and make the best Excuses for
 themselves they could; alledging the Con-
 sent of her Parents for what they did.
 But that did not at all satisfy *Alan-son*,
 who soon discharged them from his Ser-
 vice, and resolved to Travel in Search
 for *Deidamia*, tho' he knew not which
 Way to bend his Course: But after many
 tedious Journey, enquiring amongst
 those who were Favourers of the *Huge-*
ots, he yet could hear no Tydings of her.
 So that full of Grief and Sorrow, he led
 a retir'd and Melancholy Life in his own
 house, absenting himself from all Com-
 any, and Mourning like a *Turtle* that
 had lost his Mate, tho' his Friends by all
 means possible endeavoured to Comfort
 him; persuading him to surcease his
 grief; for that it was probable *Deidamia*
 by some Misfortune or other was Dead;
 and therefore they advis'd him to think of
 a Second Marriage, as that which would
 restore his former Gayety, and make him
 forget *Deidamia*. But the more they en-
 deavoured to persuade him, the more
 he was resolved to the contrary; and
 there-

therefore to avoid their continued Importunities, he fixt his Resolution once more to Travel in Quest of her ; which accordingly he did, but without Success : And therefore he resolved to return again to his own House, and there spend the Remainder of his Days in Solitude.

But as he was returning Home, in his Way, he met with a vast Concourse of People, and demanding the Occasion of it, he was told a Criminal was going to be broken on the Wheel, for a Murder he had committed ; upon which, Curiosity led him to see the Execution. And getting pretty near, the Malefactor cast his Eyes upon him, and straight knew him to be *Alanson* the Husband of *Deidamia* ; and being smitten with Remorse of Conscience, he beckoned *Alanson* to come near, and humbly begged his Pardon for the Wrong he had done him. At this *Alanson* both Started and fell a Trembling, fearing it was for her Murder the Criminal was to die : But coming nearer the Malefactor asked him, *If he had heard any News of his Lady ?* And then with Tears confessed, *That himself and another had been hired to Murder her, to which End they carried her into a Wood, (which he name*

Im- (him) but by a miraculous Providence she
 once escaped out of their Hands; that afterwards
 which had reported to those that set him to Work,
 cels: at he had actually Murthered her; for
 rn a- which he received the Reward; but which way
 pend- e escaped, he knew not; and that this was
 de. out two Years since. The Count urged
 n his m to tell the Names of those that had
 rse of hired him; but he said, He had sworn
 on of on the holy Sacrament of the Altar never to
 ng to sclose 'em; and that he feared Damnation
 murder he should: Only (said he) this I may say,
 Curio- without breaking my Oath, They were two
 And persons in whom you have put a great deal of
 or can confidence. And then solemnly attested,
 knew at what he had said was the Truth. And
 Deida- on after was Executed.

orfe- This Dying Criminal's Confession con-
 o com- firmed *Alanson*, that *Deidamia* had been
 on fo- treacherously carried thither, either from
 At thi- House or the Nunnery; and he no lon-
 Tremb- ght doubted that *Fronovius* and *Antonio*
 der th- re the Persons that had hired Villains
 neare- Murther her; and therefore though
 d he ar- ey were moved from his Service
 h Tea- ne time ago, yet he was resolved to
 her ha- rsue them, in order to bring them to
 End th- rice: But first he intended to make
 e name- fresh search after *Deidamia*, the Crimi-

nal having given him an Account where she escaped from them ; and therefore he thought (if she were still alive) she might be somewhere in the Vicinity of that Wood : Towards that therefore he bended his Course, and being arrived in Sight thereof, and seeing how vast a Thing it was, he perceived it would be a difficult Thing to find her, even though she was there. Yet at his entring in he conceived some Hopes in his Mind, that he should not lose his Labour. Whereupon alighting, and giving his Horse to his Servant, (who had attended him in all his Melancholy Travels) and charging him to attend there till he came back, he went into the Wood alone, and found himself entangled amongst Thicker Briars and Bushes ; yet still he went on searching every Cave and solitary Place often calling out, *Deidamia* ! till Darkness coming on, made him think of turning to his Man ; but he found he was gone too far to retreat back in Time, and therefore resolved to go forward : And being, no doubt, guided by Providence he happened upon that Cave where *Deidamia* had so often bewailed his Absence and mourned her own solitary State ; and

there he rested his weary and tired Body, for that Night, resolving to pursue his Search the next Morning ; which being come, just as he was going out of the Cave, he perceived something sparkle very brightly on the Ground, which he stooped and took up ; and looking on it in the open Light, he found it to be a Locket of *Diamonds*, which he had formerly given *Deidamia* ; and she unwittingly had dropt there. The finding of this, filled him with some Transports of Joy, as looking upon it as an earnest of his good Success in finding the Owner : Thereupon he often repeated her Name very loud, but could receive no Answer but by some broken Eccho's. And therefore going on, he knew not whither, but being directed by the same Providence that had before conducted her to the Cave, when he had wandered so far, that he was almost hopeless, he was suddenly set upon by two Whiffling Curs, which, upon offering to draw his Sword, ran away Barking from him ; which he pursuing came in a little Time to a Path, where he might discern the Foot-steps of Human Creatures, which very much revived his Hopes, and encouraged him

still to go on; he had not gone far before he discerned Smoke to issue from a small Cottage; to which, as he approached pretty near, he was again saluted by the furious Barking of those Dogs whom he had before pursued. This was the Cottage where *Deidamia* resided, who upon the Barking of the Dogs, looking out to see what was the Matter, espied *Alanfon* coming towards her, and (the Idea of his Image being continually in her Breast) she no sooner saw, but knew him, and running into his Arms in an Excess of Joy, was only able to Cry out, *Ah! my Dear Lord, Alanfon!* But excess of Joy proves sometimes Fatal, and it had like to have done so to *Deidamia*, for she immediately swooned away in his Arms: The Dogs still continued their Barking, which also caused the good Old Woman of the Cottage to see what the Cause was, and was extremely surprized to see a genteel Stranger there, and *Deidamia* fainting in his Arms; however, she made what haste she could to endeavour her Recovery, desiring *Alanfon* to bring her into the House, which he immediately did, telling the good Woman that he was *Deidamia's* Husband; which she (being very well

well acquainted with *Deidamia's* Story) was very glad to hear. It was a considerable Time before *Deidamia* could be brought to her self, which so much afflicted the Count, that he was almost ready to faint away himself. But his Lady being again recovered, *Alanson* with a Thousand Kisses and endearing Expressions, assured her of the Truth, Reality, and Constancy of his Affections towards her; whilst she on the other Hand, seemed to be the most satisfied Creature in the World, in that she had once more seen her dearest Lord *Alanson*; desiring him not to be troubled at her fainting away, since it was only occasioned by the Excess of that Joy she conceived in seeing him again; and that Death itself would have been easie to her upon so happy an Occasion, and especially dying in his Arms.

Whilst in this Manner they were expressing the Ardency of their Affections to each other, the good Man of the House came Home; and being told by his Wife that *Deidamia's* Husband was there, he was over-joyed; and courteously saluted *Alanson*, telling him, He was sure he was a Welcome Man there to them all, but especially to *Deidamia*, who had long

mourned his Absence. *Alanfon* kindly thanked him, and told him, *He should ever Honour him as the Refuge, and Preserver of his dear Lady.* And after such Civilities on each Side passed, the good Woman set before him such homely Refreshment as she had prepared on the Table : *Alanfon* eat but little, *Deidamia's* Presence being more to him than all the Dainties in the World ; yet perceiving with what Course Fare his Lady had been there contented, he praised her Humility, and wondered at her Virtue. Dinner being ended, *Alanfon*, was concerned for his Servant, whom he had left in the Entrance of the Wood, and would have gone back to him ; but the good Old Man would by no Means let him, telling him he would go himself, because he better knew the Way, and could easier find it ; and so taking his Dogs along with him, he went accordingly : The Man having waited at the Entrance of the Wood, from the Time that his Master went into it, till the next Morning, and hearing nothing of him, leaving his Horses in the Fields adjoyning to the Wood, resolved to find him out, and having got a good Way, he met the Old Gentleman, who

who was coming to him; and enquiring of him for his Master, whom he describ'd, he told him he had both seen and came from him, to conduct him where he was, and that he had found his Lady; at this the Servant was very glad, and joyfully went along with him. After the Old Gentleman was gone for the Servant, the Count and his Lady went into the Woods, and there she gave him a particular Account of all her Sorrows and Sufferings since his departing from her. And the Reason of her staying where she was; viz. *The Old Gentleman not daring to go out of the Wood with her, he being a proscrib'd Person; and to go without him was to endanger her own Life: Besides, she knew not how Antonio might have ordered Matters, having the Pretence of Heresie to lay to her Charge, and that hearing nothing of him in all this Time, she thought his Affections might have been estranged from her. But Alanson assured her to the contrary; telling her, He could not but wonder at the unparalleled Villany of Fronovius and Antonio; and that he had turned them out of his Service soon after he came Home from the Camp. After which the Old Gentleman and Alanson's Servant, being (as before*
E 4 *related)*

related) arrived at the Cottage, the Evening was far spent, and so they all betook themselves to rest.

The next Morning *Alanfon* was preparing for his Return home ; but before they went, their aged Landlord would needs have them stay and dine, and in discourse told him, He was once a Tenant of his Fathers ; but by cruel Edicts was forced not only to leave that Farm, but his Paternal Inheritance, suffering the Spoils and Loss of all for the sake of Christ and a good Conscience ; and in this Solitary Retirement have enjoyed more true Peace and Satisfaction, than in all the Pleasure of his Forepast Life. The Count then asked him his Name, which he told him was *De La Mont* ; upon which he presently knew and embraced him, saying, *That tho' himself was of the Roman Persuasion, yet he had often pitied his Sufferings, adding, That it was given out he died in Prison.* The Pious *Deidamia*, from the Discourse took an occasion to say, *Ah ! my dearest Lord, you see what a cruel and merciless Religion it is that you profess, and which through the Goodness of God, I have lately departed from. I am not Surpriz'd (said Alanfon) at that which*
you

you say, for I was inform'd in Flanders that you had changed your Religion. I wish to God, (replied *Deidamia*) that your self, my dearest Lord, was likewise made a partaker of the same happy Change. Upon this *Monf. De La Mont* put in, and laid down such weighty Reasons for the Truth of the Reformed Religion, and against the Errors of the Church of Rome, that it encouraged *Deidamia* farther to go on, and shew the Viciousness and Debauchery of the *Romish* Clergy, their Bloody Principles and Persecuting Spirit, so that *Alanfon* was forced to confess, that what was alledged against their Practices was true, but as to their Principles (abating that of Persecution) he believed they might be mistaken: Upon which *Deidamia* replied, I am glad, my dear Lord, to find you are against Persecution; I hope then you will be willing I shall enjoy the Liberty of my Conscience (the only Happiness I have had in this solitary Retirement) and that you will never go about to compel me to go to Mass, which I will rather chuse to die than do: To this *Alanfon* reply'd, That he was no such Bigot as to think that those that sincerely Worshipped God, according to the best of their Understandings, as he was confident

Deidamia did) might not be accepted of him, though of an Opinion different from himself : And as to compel her to go to Mass, if by Arguments he could not persuade her to it, he solemnly promised he never would use any other Means.

And being now ready to depart, *Alanson* offered *La Mont* store of Gold for their Kindness to his Lady while she had been with them, which he absolutely refused, saying, Her Conversation had been so agreeable, that they were the Persons who had been obliged. So that leave being taken, and *La Mont* Praying that God would go along with them, and make their Way Prosperous, they parted, and coming out of the Wood, the Servant readily found the Horses ; and *Deidamia* getting up behind her Lord, they made the best of their Way towards *Alanson's* House ; where they were received with the rejoicing of their Acquaintance, and much more of her Parents, to whom in a Day or two they made a Visit, *Deidamia* being received by them as one risen from the Dead. And the Story of their Daughter's Troubles being all related to them, they could not but admire the Providence of God, in preserving her,
and

and wonder at the monstrous Wickedness of *Fronovius* and *Antonio*: Who upon their hearing of the Confession of the Dying Criminal, had withdrawn themselves from their former Residences And *Antonio* (the better to escape deserved Punishment for his lustful Attempts upon *Deidamia's* Chastity) went privately to the Bishop of *Rheims*, and told him that Count *Atanfon's* Lady was deprav'd with *Herésie*, in which she was so much countenanced by her Lord, that himself for endeavouring to reclaim her, was turned out of the Family, and cut off from all Interest in it, and therefore came humbly to beg his Protection against so powerful an Adversary, since what he had done was only out of Zeal to promote the *Catholick Religion*. The Bishop received him into his Protection, and Writ a sharp Letter to the Count about it. Who having received it, believed it was done by the Instigation of *Antonio*, whom he heard he had entertained, and being troubled that so great a Villain should find any Countenance from the Bishop, he writ back again to know the Names of those that had so injuriously informed him against his Lady: But the Bishop would

would not gratifie him so far in his Desires. This made the Count return him a second Letter, written in a more angry Style, declaring, *That if he could not have Justice from him, the King himself should be acquainted with it, and by him he would seek Redress.* This so nettled the Bishop, that he sent Examiners to his Lady, to interrogate her about her Religion, of which the Count having some Intimation, sent her to her Parents, who were extreemly troubled at these fresh Misfortunes, and mightily Scandalized at the Villany of *Antonio*, and the Bishop's protecting him from Justice, grew thereupon very cold in the Profession of the *Popish* Religion, which so furiously persecuted Innocence and Virtue, and countenanced the greatest Wickedness: This the pious *Deidamia* wisely improved, and so effectually wrought with them, by her warm and zealous Discourses, that through the Operation of God's Holy Spirit assisting her, they were both brought over to the Embracing of the Truth.

The Bishop's Examiners being disappointed, returned back without their Errand; upon which the Bishop threatned to excommunicate both *Alanson* and his Family;

Family; and was soon after as good as his Word. Upon this *Alanson* Posts away to the King, who was then at *Marly*, where Complained of the Injury done him by the Bishop of *Rheims*, both in Excommunicating him, and Protecting a Villanous Criminal from Justice. But it seems the Bishop had been before-hand with him, and made his Complaint first: For the King receiv'd him very Coldly, and told him, *The Bishop of Rheims was a good Man, and he left his Business wholly to him.* On which *Alanson* returned Home much discontented, and found that in his Absence fresh search had been made in his House for his Lady, tho' without Success. Then he went to the Bishop himself, and boldly charged him with *Entertaining a wicked Person, to the prejudice of his Honour*; telling him who he was, and declared his Crimes, desiring he might be brought forth, and his Lady should appear. But the Bishop refusing this, and telling him, *His Lady was accused of Heresie, and he of Countenancing it*; the Count in a Kind of Holy Anger, told him, *That Religion could not be of God, which encouraged Villany, and sought the Destruction of them that were Virtuous.* At this

this the Bishop storm'd and told him, That he should be answered in another Nature. And soon after he had secret Notice from Court, That upon a fresh Complaint of the Bishops, both he and his Lady were perscrib'd as Huguenots; and that notwithstanding his Friends Intercession, and his own former Merits, his Places were taken away, and his Estate ordered to be seized as a Terror to others. Alanson finding himself unable to withstand this Storm, packed up the Richest of his Effects, and privately sent them to his Wife's Father, where she was all this while concealed, and then followed after himself. Where having declared the great Injustice he had met withal, contrary to all Religion, Honour, Honesty, and Conscience. He then told his Relations he was resolved, by God's Help to embrace that Religion, for which he had been a Sufferer before he was a Professor; For that Religion could not be of God, that did so evidently set up the Kingdom of the Devil. At which they all rejoiced, and Deidamia more especially; who passionately Embracing him, said, Her Father and Mother were of the same Mind with him; at which Alanson was the more encouraged. But lest

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their Adversaries should come thither to search for them, they withdrew into a small Village and lived obscurely, while Montaign could hear of a convenient Vessel to transport them into a Country where they might enjoy more Liberty.

You have before heard how Bernard the Gardener was sold to a Master of a Ship belonging to one of the French Plantations, in the *West Indies*; before we conclude, we will briefly shew how God's Providence watched over him for good also. In his Voyage at Sea they met with so extraordinary a Storm, that all expected present Death; but Bernard was very Calm, putting up his Fervent Prayer to Almighty God, which was followed by a very great Serenity and Calmness. This made the Master have a Respect for him, and oftentimes discoursed with him, his Behaviour being always Sober, and his Discourse Savoury. The Master having made his Voyage sold Bernard for a Slave, and having staid there about two Months, return'd again to France, but the Discourses and Behaviour of Bernard had made so deep an Impression in his Mind, that he was greatly troubled for having sold him, insomuch that he could not Rest, until he had taken

taken a Solemn Resolution the next Voyage to be made, to bring him back, and accordingly the next Year making another Voyage thither, he made it his Business to enquire after him, and having found him, ask'd if he was willing to have his Liberty, and return to his own Country? Bernard replied, He never was in Love with Slavery; but was contented under it whilst God's Providence ordered it so; but if he might have his Liberty, he would chuse it rather. Whereupon the Master paid the Ransom, and brought him back to France; nor was he ~~a~~ a loser by it; for as a Recompense for his Kindness, it pleased God to make Bernard an Instrument to open his Eyes, and bring him to the acknowledgment of the Truth. Bernard being got again into his own Country, made it his Business to enquire after the Welfare of Alanson's Family, and being told of the Sufferings that had lately befallen them, he was extremely grieved, tho' at the same Time he could not but rejoyce that they suffer'd in so good a Cause. And speaking of them to some of his Old Christian Friends; he was told by one of them, that both the Count and his Lady lived Obscurely and in Disguise, in the Neighbouring Village, and that if he had a Mind to see them, he would give him a Note to the Gentleman of the House, upon which

which he should have Admittance to them; or otherwise they would not be spoken with by any one. Bernard gladly accepted of his Friends Kindness; and straight went to the House, and delivered the Gentleman the Note, the Purport of which was, That he had known the Bearer many Years for a Faithful Friend and Brother; and that he had been formerly a Servant of the Count Alanfon's, and had a great Desire to see his Lady, which he might safely let him do. Upon reading this Note, the Gentleman desired him to come in, and sent up one of his Servants to acquaint Deidamia there was one below desired to speak with her; upon which Bernard was presently called up; Deidamia was mightily surprized to see Bernard, whom she thought she should never have seen more, and very much rejoyced at it; introducing him to her Lord, and afterwards to her Parents, who all made very much of him and were glad to see him. And having communicated the Various Providences of God to one another since they had been parted, they all blessed the Lord for his Goodness, and for his wonderful Works to the Children of Men: And afterward consulting how to procure a Vessel

Vessel, to convey them out of Danger, *Bernard* gave them an Account, that the Master of the Vessel which brought him back to *France*, was also converted; and that now his Vessel lay ready to sail for *Denmark*; and he was sure he would be glad to serve them. To this they all agreed; and thereupon *Bernard* went immediately to the Master of the Ship, who readily consented to carry them, and ordered their Goods to be brought presently, and themselves to come Aboard at Midnight; at which Time *Bernard* conducted them to the Ship, and then went Aboard with him in quality of their Servant; and soon after, the Wind serving, they set sail for *Denmark*; where being arrived, and tarrying a few Days, they hired a *Dutch* Vessel to carry them to *Rotterdam*, and from thence they went by Boat to *Utrecht*, which being a pleasant Place, and of a very good Air, they resolved there to settle.

Thus, *Courteous Reader*, thou hast had a brief, but true Relation of the Mercy and Goodness of God to that Noble Family, which is the Subject of this Narrative: And he that Reads it through out seriously, will find Cause to make

the same Observations that David did of
 Old, *Mark the perfect Man, and behold the*
upright, for the End of that Man is Peace.
 Which the Apostle St. James farther Ex-
 emplifies in his Epistle, *You have heard of*
the Patience of Job, and have seen the End
of the Lord, how he is very pitiful and of
tender Mercy. Here you have seen the
 great distress of *Deidamia*, and here you
 have seen the Goodness of God in her
 Deliverance. Here you have the Count
Alanson rifled of all his Estate and Profeffi-
 on; and here you have seen how God has
 Graciously made it up, in giving him that
 Faith which is far more precious than
 the Gold which perisheth.

But I cannot conclude without giving you
an Account of the Judgment of God upon
Fronovius and Antonio, that others may
fear and give Glory to God.

Fronovius after the Seifure of *Alanson's*
 Estate, and his Departure into *Holland*,
 returned into those Parts, but finding
 himself hated by all Men for his Villany
 retired into *Normandy*, where Solicit-
 ing his Landlord's Daughter to yield to
 his Lust, and she refusing it, he took an
 opportunity to Ravish her, for which he
 was hang'd without the Gates of *Roan*.

And

And as for *Antonio*, tho' he escaped the Justice of Man, he could not escape the Judgment of God, for falling distracted a little Time after, he confessed it was God's Judgment upon him for the Mischief he had wrought against his Lord *Alanson*, and his Virtuous Lady; saying *They had taken away to be saved, but he was sure to be damned*; and so dashing out his own Brains against a Wall, he died miserably. Both of them Verifying the Words of the inspired Pen-Man, *Is not Destruction to the wicked, and a strange Punishment to the Workers of Iniquity?*

William Shuterock

4 Book June

22 1677

A Brief Account of the Present
Persecutions of the French Pro-
testants.

THE restless Malice of the great
Enemy of Mankind against the
Church of God, has been sufficiently
manifested in all Ages of the World;
and began to exert it self first of all in
Cain, who killed his Brother *Abel*, be-
cause his own Deeds were Wicked, and
his Brother's Righteous as the Holy Scrip-
tures inform us: And it has been his
frequent Practice, when he could not
withdraw the People of God from the
Profession of the Truth by the Bait of
Wordly Advantage, to raise a Flood of
Persecution against them, by that Means
extirpate them, if it were possible, out of
the Earth. Of which no People in *Europe*
has in this Age had more Fatal Experi-
ence than the Poor Protestants in *France*,
who have been so barbarously used by
the Blood-thirsty Papists there, that a
True Account of their Sufferings will
appear to the next Age rather like Ro-
mantick Fictions, than (as indeed they
are) Realities. And there are two Things
in

in it that appear alike Admirable; and that is, the barbarous Rage and Cruelty of the Persecutors, and the invincible Courage and Constancy of the poor Sufferers, who are so mightily supported by the Divine Grace, that they not only Triumph over all their Tortures, but suffer joyfully the Loss of all, as knowing that they have in Heaven a better and a more induring Substance. — But I will recite briefly some Instances of their Sufferings.

Some they Condemn to the Gallies, where they are coupled commonly with the Vilest Miscreants, Condemned either for the most flagitious Crimes, whose fearful Oaths and Execrations are continually wounding of their Pious Ears: There is generally five of them placed upon every Form, fettered with a heavy Chain of about ten or twelve foot long: They Shave their Heads, from time to time, to shew they are Slaves, and are not allowed to wear their Hats and Perriwigs: They have only Beans, and nothing else for their Food, with about fourteen Ounces of Course Bread a Day, and no Wine at all: They are devoured in Winter by Lice, and in the Summer by Bugs and Fleas, and forced

forced to lie upon one another, as Hogs in a Sty: And every Day threatened and tormented by Friars and Priests, who not being able to convince them by Reason, think to do it by Severity.

Some they put in Prison, and keep them in Nasty Dungeons and Holes, full of Mire and Dirt, without any Bed, or so much as Straw to lie upon, and not suffered to have the least glimmering of the Sun, or the Sight of a Candle. And allowed so small a Quantity of Victuals as is hardly sufficient to keep them alive. In this miserable Case, without any pity to 'em, some have been kept above a Year together. One of them being visited after Twelve-Months Imprisonment in this Manner, by one called a Director of Conscience, just as they were going to bring him his small Allowance, he could not forbear crying out, as soon as he saw him, *Lord in what a Condition are you, Sir!* To which the poor Sufferer reply'd with a Christian Fortitude, worthy of the Cause he suffered for, *Could you but see the secret Pleasure my Heart Experiences, you would think me too happy.* The Priest told him, *The greatest Sufferings did but little to the Glory of Martyrdom, unless he suffer'd for Truth and Justice.* To this the poor Prisoner

soner reply'd, He granted it; but that was his Case, the Holy Ghost so sealed it to his Heart, that the very Thoughts thereof supported him in the Midst of all his Afflictions: This Person has through God's Providence been since delivered; and has declared, that the Consolations that God out of his infinite Love afforded to him, were so great, that he little regarded the Miseries he was reduc'd to, tho' he continued in that lamentable Condition about two and twenty Months, without changing his Cloaths, till his Beard was grown as long as the Hair of his Head, and his Face as pale as a Plaster'd Wall; who declared also, that when he was deliver'd the Number of those chained to the Gallies for the sake of Religion, was about Three Hundred and Seventy, who glorify'd God in their Sufferings, with an unparallel'd Courage and Constancy.



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